

# ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY



KNEELAND PLATT KETCHAM

3, 17. 20.

LIBRARY OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PRINCETON. N. J.

---

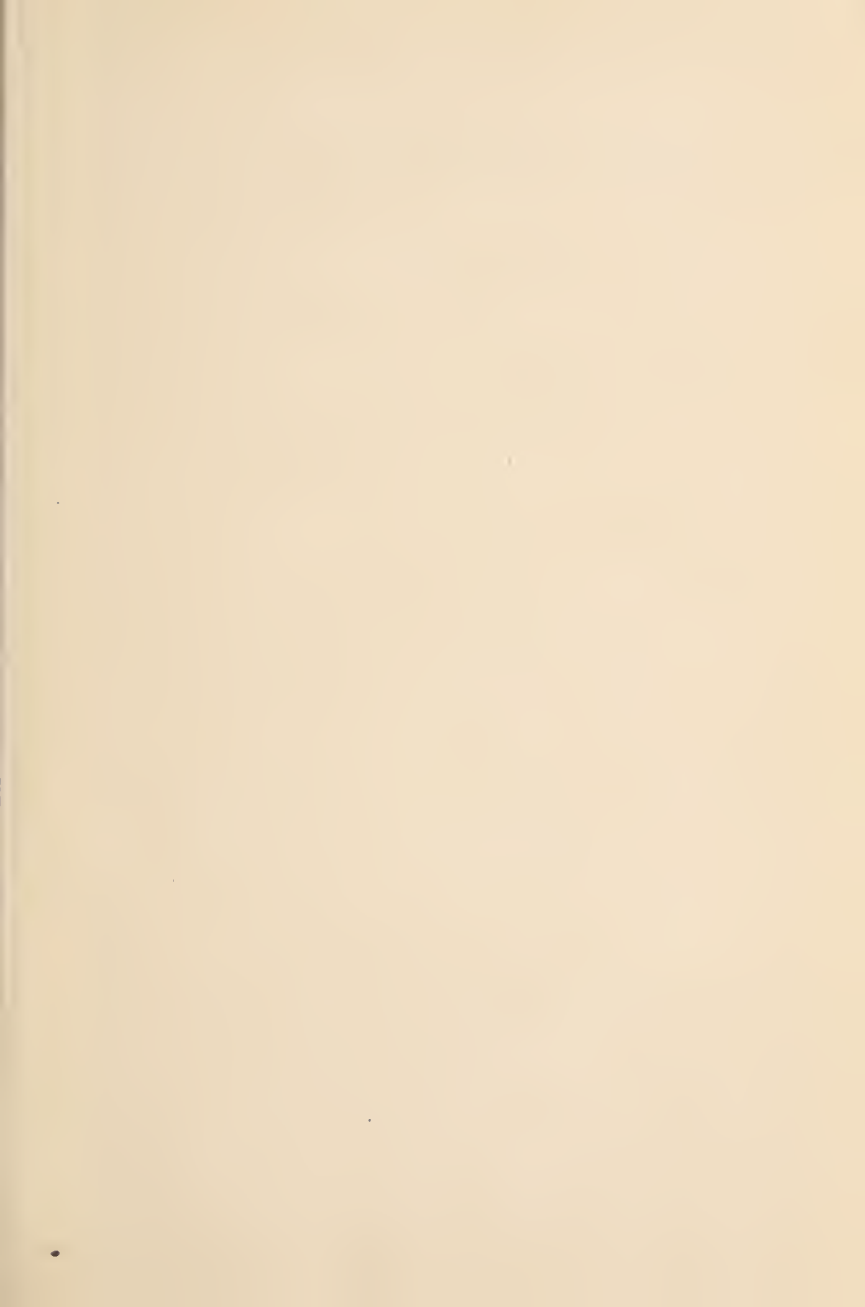
PRESENTED BY Mrs. X.P. Ketcham.

BX 8 .K48 1908  
Ketcham, Kneeland Platt.  
Organized Christianity





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2015







# Organized Christianity

OR

NEW TESTAMENT UNITY DEMANDED  
AND FEASIBLE IN THE  
TWENTIETH CENTURY

BY  
REV. KNEELAND PLATT KETCHAM ✓

*"To hear the Bridegroom's voice!"*

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR  
337 WEST 23RD STREET  
NEW YORK  
. 1908

Copyright, 1908, by  
REV. K. P. KETCHAM

VAN REES PRESS, 24 AND 26 VANDEWATER STREET, NEW YORK.



# Organized Christianity

## CHAPTER I

WHAT is the matter with the Protestant and Evangelical Churches of the twentieth century?

One thing is certain; there is an evident, widespread, profound disappointment in the spiritual developments of the last seven years. The "Great Awakening" is indefinitely postponed, the "Forward Movement" halts, and in this autumn of nineteen hundred and seven there is an ominous hush—a pervading sense of uncertainty and perplexity with no inspiration of intelligent hope from the past, and no promise of intelligent hope from the future. It is as if the disciples had toiled all the night and taken nothing, and then when the morning was now come and they were weary, dreary and

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

hungry, there was no cheering, assuring voice of the Master, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find."

At the opening of the century, men said, "The Kingdom of God is at hand; the entire world at last awaits the messenger of redemption—Heaven as always with its truth and grace, earth as never before, with its contributions of thought and all facilities, proffer boundless resources and afford boundless encouragement."

And necessity as well as opportunity, demand as well as supply, were conspicuously evident. Japan, China and other non-Christian nations were not only in sin and misery as ever before, but were passing all determining crises of their political and religious life. With them at last, "one day" of present opportunity was as "a thousand years." Moreover, necessity was upon the Church from within. Educated young men to an astounding degree turned aside from the ministry. Rationalism was emasculating her

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

creeds. Destructive criticism was discrediting her Sacred Book. Church members were pre-  
vailingly worldly and not unfrequently rascally. Her pulpits in general had lost power in Church and world alike.

And the darkness over Church and world alike, that could be felt, was felt and reckoned upon as at once demanding and presaging the dawn—the morning dawn of brighter things—even the “Great Twentieth Century Revival!” Nor were there lacking men and measures, leaders and schemes for its realization.

In the fall of 1900, Mr. William Phillips Hall (partly in the name of what Mr. Moody was supposed to intend to do), with others, having indeed religious fervor and evangelical ideas and business energy and methods and highly confident predictions (yet on the fatal basis of “existing organizations”), notoriously failed of any “twentieth century” success.

J. Wilbur Chapman followed with unlimited financial support, General Assembly patronage,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

thorough organization, untiring energy. And then W. J. Dawson, of London, with his "culture," and R. A. Torrey with his Bible soundness and severity and zeal, and next Gipsy Smith, with gospel truth and exciting power, calling saints and sinners to "listen." These indeed did not "labor in vain in the Lord," but they did conspicuously fail to organize the exodus and lead Israel out of Egypt.

Upon all of which the *Ram's Horn* significantly comments: "An apostasy or a revival! That is the alternative which the Christian Church is facing. For nearly twenty years we have been marking time, but we have not been making progress. True, we have been adding wealth and numbers, but we have not been gaining power. Sporadic revivals break out in places, but evangelism does not spread like a holy contagion. There is no use blinking facts. Conditions are serious. But they are exceptional. Compared with those of some previous periods they are discouraging, but compared

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

with other epochs they appear far from hopeless. The march of the Kingdom seems to be measured by the ebb and flow of the spiritual tide. To-day the tide is low. It has been falling steadily since the stirring days of Dwight L. Moody. There are many signs that low-water mark has been registered, and that henceforth we will see a rising flood. God is calling the Church and individual Christians to higher walks of faith and duty. It must be either advance or apostasy. We cannot stand still."

And listen to Congregational testimony: "Therefore there comes to-day a mighty call to the Church to save the life of the nation in saving its own life. Of the seriousness of this juncture there can be no question. I am content to be called an alarmist if you will. There are times when the watchman must blow the trumpet and warn the people. I believe that my habit is sufficiently optimistic, but optimism is treachery. It is not well with the Church

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

this day; it is ill with the Church. Her grip is loosening, her energies are flagging; there is a perceptible slackening in her progress. Something is wrong and every thoughtful man knows it. Something is wrong with our evangelism. What is it? Is it the higher criticism and the new theology? Read Dr. Brown's sober, searching, candid review of the Chapman meetings in Oakland: 'All the churches, of every name, coöperated most cordially. These churches were crowded (with church members) every day for weeks; the theology of all the preaching was above suspicion; the higher criticism was put to shame, and sociology was not so much as mentioned; but the great outside multitude, the multitude of the unchurched, was practically untouched.' "

And here is Episcopal testimony: "I am in favor of a change. I do not know what is the best way of doing things in the churches, but I know the way we are doing now is not the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

best way, or the world would be nearer its salvation than it seems to be."

And the Presbyterian: "Now to be wholly frank in so momentous a matter, in the present attitude and aim and effort of the ministry there is not even a shadow of hope for the lost world of this generation, even if there be for any of the next ten generations. The awful outlook of a thousand millions of the human race passing on to hopeless death, has the dreadful promise of being monotonously repeated with each successive generation, away into the indefinite future! Is not this the real state of the case? And if so, is it not high time to 'awake out of sleep'—this sleep of death? If God's work is to go forward at the pace set for it by Christ in the great Commission and by the 'signs of the times,' the impulse must be given by a mighty and complete transformation of the life and conception and purpose and work of the ministry. Is not that patent to every one who

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

has breadth enough of spiritual vision to take in the present conditions and needs?'

At the beginning of the century it seemed to the writer so evident that an epoch of supreme transition was at hand—and that of the "Hosts of Christ's Triumphal March, for which alone," as Dante says, "these spheres have rolled and reap their harvests"—that of these hosts, the unseen, the invisible, the celestial division was in fact already marching on, and that God was imperatively calling the earthly cohorts to fall in line and to fall in line according to His own New Testament plan of campaign, that he published in the *New York Tribune* of January 7, 1901, the following protest:

"To the Editor of the *Tribune*.

Sir: Can you put me forth a little space in which to suggest some elemental considerations to William Phillips Hall and his coadjutors in their most praiseworthy plan for a deep-



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

er religious life on the part of all of us for the twentieth century?

First—Where the divine and human are at all in rivalry, the human—as we all theoretically admit—must unconditionally surrender, and wherein God's Christianity and man's Church are in competition the Church must give way or be brought to confusion, and 'her candlestick removed out of its place' sooner or later.

Second—According to the Bible, and, indeed, the guileless honesty of all Christian prayers, men, singly or organically, are 'earthen vessels,' and until first of all and unqualifiedly polarized, in thought, heart, plans, associations to Jesus Christ, in supreme aims, and to the Holy Spirit in supreme applications and dependence, are doomed to paralysis, blundering, failure.

Third—The Apostolic Christians rose from utter weakness to world-wide power, from ignorance and feebleness to the conquest of humanity in all its extent and variety outward,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and its depravity downward, in setting aside everything of creeds or ritualistic ceremonials or formulations of organization, until each and all, with a glowing passion of enthusiasm, had accepted Christ in His love and His law, as 'the Head of all things to the Church,' 'in whom all fullness dwelt,' and experienced accordingly the all corrective, all restraining, all constraining enchantment of the Holy Ghost. Their Bible, like our Bible, mentioned fasting, Sabbath observance, ordinations, baptism, the Lord's Supper, but with not a word of primary and absolute legislation as to any particulars of any of them, and to this end, that these might take their place duly in and after organization before the all preeminent Christ, and with all the infinite advantages in the determining and administration of them, that the Spirit of God would subsequently and consequently give.

This the early and victorious Christians fully understood and observed, and we, too, understand and observe it in part, and suffi-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ciently to condemn ourselves before earth and heaven in that we do not altogether accept it as the Apostles did. We are saying: 'Let us rise to New Testament conceptions of Christ and the Holy Ghost and the promise, the law, the liberty of them, and so organized let us then determine as to our Church fasting and prayers and praises and giving and Sabbath observance, and all sorts of particulars as to rites and creeds. Yet now, after all, let us keep back part of the price, let us have some reservations, let us hold back and organize around something for our own human glory and gratification, the celebration of our own opinions and convictions, aside from and below the heavenly heights of Christ and the Head.'

So the Presbyterian says: 'My creed, my standards first!' And the Baptist says: 'No creed but the Bible! Yet not after all entirely—not entirely the Bible plan of Christ, and the Holy Ghost first, and then ordinances—but let us have one exception, the mode and subjects

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

of Baptism, first, and then Christ and the Holy Ghost!' And, correspondingly, other sectarians make exceptions and insist on some ritualistic or historic or dogmatic name to be put in before 'the Name' which, by God's unalterable and eternal decree, is, for truth and rite and life and organization of earth, and for heaven beyond, 'above every name.'

And as a result of all this we see, for instance, in Presbyterian pulpits and at Baptist communion tables, men freely accepted who openly confess that they have no passion of heart or thought for Christ, and no imploring eagerness for the Holy Spirit's ministries, and men rejected of whom, in their quadrature of quest and love and faith and zeal, as God has appointed these, 'the world is not worthy!'

Fourth—As far as appears, God cares very little for terrestrial, low-down, far-off 'unity.' What the New Testament and the present higher socialism, and thoughtful philosophers of humanity, and government commissioners

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and army and navy commanders, returning from heathen lands, and the awakening heathen themselves demand, is a general and unqualified rallying of Christians around and for genuine Christianity—around and for the lonely, but all accessible Height of Christ, where God meets men!

Gentlemen of the twentieth century evangelism, you have your work cut out for you already. For a Christianity of power, for the fellowship of God's children, and the confession of Christ before men and the plans and organization of redemption work which belong to Christianity—Christ first, and everything after! Until you reach His height, failure is yours, and what is more, when you have gained that strategic, that sacred, that all commanding acropolis, you will have no time or energies or appetite for—as, indeed, you will have no need for—any subordinate or rival station below.

The twentieth century preacher, in his closet and his study, consumed in prayers to

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

God and thoughts for God and man, and the twentieth century layman 'laying aside every weight' as he 'runs' and 'looks,' will thus 'find' his 'life,' and the Church her organization, her development, her mission, her 'joy and crown,' and thus, fully satisfied at last—how, how have all been straitened until this was accomplished! From all directions of earth and heaven the one call is for God's Christianity. Shall we hear it?"

Yes, and from earth and heaven shall we hear, if we have ears to hear, not only the call for God's Christianity, but as well, definite and indeed revolutionary specifications under the call.

This explains the unique and illuminating career of Dwight L. Moody and in this "he being dead yet speaketh," and to a degree probably not at all fully appreciated even by his own children.

Not since the days of the apostles has a man

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

anywhere on this planet been more clearly endorsed of heaven and believed in by men, as God's messenger, than he. Whether weighed in the balances of a city reporter or a humble pastor, or a cultured thinker, or Catholic in Ireland, or prelate in England, or "double distilled" Presbyterian in Scotland, or sailor on the sea, or soldier on the main, or any critical men of church or world in his own land, the one reverent verdict upon his work has been: "This is the finger of God"; and upon himself: "He is right with God."

And now all this in what peculiar and significant twentieth century interpretations from the Heavenly Headquarters? These:

1. That spiritual power experienced or transmitted is not confined to the highly organized, historic Churches.

2. That these have no advantage whatever in the operations of God-given power.

3. In the events and experiments of the Churches since his day, the revolutionary and

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

startling lesson that divine power, in the appointed measure and conquests of it, will be denied to persons and establishments, in any marked degree diverging from Mr. Moody's evidently New Testament spirit and Christocentric ideals—that the one coming hope of the Church and of humanity is in Christianity as discriminated from "Churchianity" and in an evangelical creed as distinguished from denominational "standards."

The shechinah voice of Israel in the wilderness to-day is, "Them that honor Me, I will honor," and "You have got to confess Christ before men!"

And there are other handwritings on the wall of the ecclesiastical palace. Twenty years ago the sectarians were served with eviction notices in the providential discovery of the "Teaching of the Apostles." In this Baptists were notified that baptism by immersion only was really unscriptural; Presbyterians that infant baptism, and teaching, as distinguished from ruling



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

elders, had no scriptural support; and Episcopalians that the three orders of Bishop, Priest and Deacon were unauthorized. Nevertheless, as it is most edifying to observe as a new illustration of the familiar fact that, as Herbert Spencer says, "organizations are rarely reformed from the inside," during all the twenty years these significant warnings of coming dispossession have been unanimously and studiously ignored by all the denominationalists. Said the small boy, reminded by the nurse of his mother's unwelcome order, "Stop 'minding me, I's trying to forget it."

And in more recent days the divine "rising up early and speaking" in these respects, has been strikingly illustrated in the publications of up-to-date and thorough-going scholars—Rudolph Sohm for example. It is scarcely conceivable that any intelligent mind-free man could read Sohm's "The Church and Its Origin in Primitive and Catholic Times," as interpreted by Walter Lowrie, without being satisfied

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

that in a New Testament organization of Christianity there must be the vital headship of Christ in the love of God and the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit at the centers, with all matters of rite and ceremony, offices and officers, creed and code, remanded to the background—the background of Christian liberty and executive expediency. But what manner of man would the minister be who at the present day could at all accurately represent the New Testament personality? And what the manner of the modern New Testament organization? You would probably detect a fairly accurate answer to the first question in a composite portrait of Dwight L. Moody and Richard S. Storrs, and to the second, in a slightly extended and modified Young Men's Christian Association, as all ordained and marshalled under the banner inscription, "Bible principles to please God and business principles to win men!"

It ought never to be forgotten, as quite fla-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

grantly and frequently it undoubtedly is, that the issues of the present hour are referred to power—not so much light as power. The question of a man just now is not “Is he presumably or possibly a Christian?” but, “Is he a Christian duly experiencing and exerting power?” Says Herbert Spencer: “An over-valuation of teaching is necessarily a concomitant of this erroneous interpretation of mind. Everywhere the cry is educate, educate, educate! Everywhere the belief is that by such culture as schools furnish, children, and therefore adults, can be molded into the desired shapes. It is assumed that when men are taught what is right they will do what is right; that a proposition intellectually accepted will be morally operative. Yet this conviction is contradicted by every-day experience.” Yes, and spiritual facts correspond with this philosophy.

The up-to-date demand is not for any ecclesiastical unity of Roman Catholic, Episcopalian,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Congregationalist and a score of others, on the basis of a minimum of possible Christian experience, but for organized unity on the basis of New Testament conditions of *power*. What are these—and what is, indeed, New Testament Christianity? Most portentous, delusive and pernicious are the current replies given in these days by journals, such as the *Outlook* and *Independent*, and by multitudes of more or less “new” theologians, to the simple question—What is Christianity?

## CHAPTER II

AND what is God's New Testament Christianity, as to ends and means? The first specified end of Christian aims is the exaltation of Jesus Christ. As to this point, to be sure, analysis fails, and Christ as "All and in all," in the first stages, preempts the entire domain of a Christian's activities, as at once end and means. "For Him are all things, by Him are all things." God, indeed, has not been pleased to declare to us the philosophy of the matter—the reasons why Christ "having humbled Himself and become obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name," but the revelations of the fact glow with celestial radiance in gospels and epistles alike, and with ineffable reflections

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

from the bright world of which, in the "glory of God," the record is, "the Lamb is the light thereof," and from art and music and philosophy and poetry and history—as well as piety and hymnology, of "this present evil world."

The first great constraint upon a Christian as to his sonship or his discipleship, is to *follow* Christ. This was the primal law of discipleship when He was upon the earth, and it is the same now. The present "follow me" from the celestial shores is just as plain as the "follow me" of the shores of Galilee and means the same: humble, penitential, absolute *subordination*, the most unqualified, enthusiastic, passionate, joyful *devotion*, the most unquestioning and reposeful *confidence*, in childlike *dependence*, and the most hallowed and affectionate and all constraining and all contributive *personal intimacy*, and ever more and more, exact *imitation* in character, speech, action. St. Paul, so eagerly polarized for highest, noblest aims, records "in Christ" thirty-three times.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Says Dr. Robert F. Coyle, speaking for thousands of his fellow Christians, Presbyterian and otherwise, and unconsciously portraying spiritual campaigns: "To be a Christian is first and last and midst, a personal relation to the Lord Jesus Christ. Love for Him, devotion to Him, enthronement of Him in the affections, in the will, in the whole life—that is what it means. It is the union of my soul, your soul with Christ, as the branch is in the vine and the vine in the branch. All other questions are subsidiary and unessential; this personal relationship is vital and fundamental. . . . That is what it is to be a Christian, to be loyally, devotedly, unalterably attached to Christ. Begin there and everything else will take care of itself. Doctrines and creeds will fall into their proper places, morality will be shot through and through with life, and conversion will be a matter of daily occurrence, a daily pledge of fealty to Jesus."

But an interesting practical question emerges

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

at this point. Are Dr. Coyle and his fellow Presbyterians, and fellow Christians generally, executively consistent? Have they attained or are they striving to attain, an organic realization of Christianity on this, their own basis—according to their own concessions—in the line of the New Testament and experimental principles what they advocate?

At the conclusion of a thoughtful article on "Federation," in 1902, Dr. Daniel H. Evans says: "My own personal conclusion is that God is exercising over the varied parts of His beloved Church, a kind and impartial supervision; and that, with a view to fulfill His desire for the paramount object of saving the world by His Spirit, He is drawing His people into tender sympathy and active coöperation; that in the divine process of evolution, we have reached the stage of federation, and that the growth of a widespread spiritual life from within will ultimately compel the devoutly to-be-wished consummation of a real hearty and



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

holy *organic union* of the Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." And at the opening he remarks: "We are not, in connection with this topic, to consider what was the original condition and the divine intention; for at first the Church was *one* and our Lord prayed for the unity of its members. Nor are we to dwell upon the Kingdom of God as it shall shine in the light of the millennial glory; for that union will then characterize the Church, I think all will allow. But at present, with things as they are, is union practical or even possible?"

We remember that denominational differences by lapse of time have been strengthened into traditions, and that they are fortified by conscientious interpretations of Scripture. The varying shades of theology are as fixed as the inborn temperament of men. There is besides a wide range of taste as to modes of worship which cannot be changed in a day. There is on the other hand, however, a practical possibility for the gathering of religious forces in

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

behalf of evangelical work and moral reform and civic regeneration."

But why is there this "practical possibility" for federation and not for all the ends of Christianity by the appointed New Testament plan of organization? Because, as here in fact conceded, of men's multiform obstinacy in "denominational differences," which appear in countless "traditions" and "interpretations" and "shades of theology" and "tastes as to modes of worship." All which duly interpreted means that God is indeed now calling upon His children to unite, to organize before and for Jesus Christ, but that from numberless biases and habits of religio-intellectual self-gratification, they refuse the Saviour's divine administration of spiritual and practical headship, and do as they please.

And are not Doctors Coyle and Evans together unconsciously charging their orthodox and Trinitarian brethren with an offence closely corresponding to Unitarianism? Yea, verily,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

with a heterodoxy more inveterate than that of Unitarians, who do indeed subordinate the all divine Christ in the categories of the Trinity, and degrade Him from His due personal rank in the Kingdom of God? What have we here, indeed, but God's orthodox children subordinating Christ to *themselves* in His administrative functions?

"Organization *ought to be* for, and before Christ the Head," they say. "It shall be for and before our denominational difference, traditions, inborn temperaments, tastes in worship—our biases and self indulgence." Unitarians slight Christ in a false philosophy; these in false, delusive self-esteem.

The Federation convention of November, 1905, shut the doors in the face of Unitarians, while a keen bird's ear listening to the proceedings, first to last, would have detected these unconscious deliverances:

"1. God's children are now peremptorily called to be duly organized under Christ's per-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sonal leadership, in the power of the Holy Spirit, for knowledge, experience, work. Organic unity is now demanded by God's word and the present-day facts.

2. They could be, only the Christians have intrenched themselves in imposing institutions, vested interests and pride of personal debate and acquired attachments. So organic unity will be difficult.

3. The thirty sets of Federators positively refuse to forego themselves and accept God and the facts, and say, 'We will enter no organization of Christianity except our thirty sets of denominational biases are provided for first.' So organic unity will be impossible."

The summons of the "Next Great Awakening" will be for Unitarians and Trinitarians alike to honor Christ as God has appointed, as the first supreme objective of organized Christian thought, affection, activity, anticipation!

The second special end of New Testament Christianity is development of Christian char-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

acter; a studied development, rapid, steady, comprehensive, symmetrical; a development of mind in the knowledge of the truth and capacity for the truth; of soul, in faith and love mounting upward, and love and purposes pushing outward, in the happy and indeed ecstatic experience of those who are "pure in heart," and "see God."

New Testament Christianity calls for *persons* all aglow in the loveliness, the attractions of self-control, self-sacrifice, genial altruism and withal sunny speech from fresh and winning thought showing forth, without, as projected reflections from the transcendent "beauty of holiness" within, and for *communities* and *assemblies* pervaded, actuated, sanctified by a *zeitgeist*, which is not simply parallel with and dependent upon any earth-born spirit of the times, but which is due to the educations and inspirations of God Himself!

The third end of Christian aims is Christian fellowship—the outreaching love, fruitful and

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

realized in mutual patience, forgiveness, charity, sympathy and multiform helpfulness—with fitting communion in and with the Lord, at His table and otherwise, and such speaking one to another as the Lord, hearkening, shall hear—as He opens a “book” of gracious “remembrance” and says, “They will be mine.”

Fourth, Christian work: Every Christian going forth as an ambassador for Christ, constraining sinful and miserable men, near and far, to be “reconciled to God”—every Christian constraining a fellow Christian to deeper knowledge, deeper spirituality, deeper consecration. The Christian is indeed to abound in other-worldness in his character and prayers, but after all, for just this—that he may abound in this-worldness in his activities. His “life is hid with Christ in God,” indeed, yet no Christian is permitted to register himself as a heavenly absentee from earth’s sins and sorrows and problems, moral, social and political. His headquarters, his “heart’s true home,” is in heaven,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

but as an excitedly interested, busy, eager commuter, he must regularly come to earth for *business*. His heart passion may be above the world—his hand passion must be down here.

To quote from Dr. D. S. Gregory: "Who that has made the experiment, has not found greater help from the intercourse with Brainerd and McChesney and Hannington—and just because their struggle Godward was made safe and noble by their earnest life of action—than from the contact with the fascinating and intense, but narrow, monkish, impractical, Romish spirit of the author of the 'Imitation of Christ?'"

And says Dr. J. H. W. Stuckenberg: "The true Church will be reformatory in social matters in exact proportion to the depth and purity and efficiency of its spirituality. It will be as natural for it to seek to promote economic equity, to purify politics, to regenerate institutions, to uplift the masses, to establish hospitals, orphan asylums and reformatories and

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

to relieve poverty and all forms of misery, as it is for the sun to shine. These 'works of God' have their warrant in the works of Christ and the apostles, in the deeds of the early Church, in the merciful activity of Christians in all ages, and in the doctrines and spirit of the New Testament."

The fifth end of New Testament Christianity is anticipating heaven, which, however, like happiness, will be realized incidentally and as an insured way-side result of due regard for Christ, holiness, unity and energetic activity.

These, plainly—according to gospels and epistles alike, and the concurrent testimony of personal piety and general Church history of all lands and all periods for nineteen hundred years—are the *ends* of New Testament Christianity.

But what of the means? Of course anybody, anything—a flower, a bird, a laughing child, a conceited scientist or self-satisfied philosopher, or higher critic, or "new" theologian, or a



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

stingy or "tainted money" rich man, or a mean poor man, or a bigoted Churchman, or self-gratifying denominationalist, or a prayerless and greedy church member, or indeed a godless sinner—can contribute to Christianity *on the circumference*. But the life question, and the eternal life question is: What are the appointed and authenticated agencies—the means endorsed of God and experience for appropriate *power*—for Christianity in genuine, characteristic, adequate effectiveness, *at the centers*?

And it is to be remarked at the outset, that the secret of Christianity is not in any knowledge prior to, or in rivalry with, or independent of the inspired Word of God; nor any more in any dead-level creed which, however orthodox and comprehensive, has no fitting recognition of perspective—of the facts and principles which God has made forever preeminent.

And then positively, the secret of Christianity may be epitomized in *Theism* and *Heroism*. We are sorely troubled in these days with

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

atheism and egoism. Men gently, timidly murmur, "We believe in God the Father Almighty," and vociferously and confidently shout, "We believe in ourselves!"—and, as a result, God not honored, is consequently not operative.

But what are the elements which belong to true, effective Theism? The answer is: Due regard for God's Word in its divinity, inspiration, authority; due regard for God's highly exalted Son in his claims and benefactions; due regard for God's Holy Spirit in his efficiency—and all, with radiant hope indeed, yet with the rational humility, self-abasement and self-suspicion which the guilty meanness within, so declared of God and discovered of men, when they have truly "found themselves," calls for.

Nor in this holy quest of life are these elements to be taken seriatim, but collectively, like several ingredients of one prescription, simultaneously and coöperatively. The three-fold theism and heroism work for life, not only one

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

of them sometimes, but both of them all the time, in every person and every experience. The Princeton theological student who at his graduation declared that he was less prepared to preach when he left than when he came, illustrated this. For three years he had been diligent, but fatally partial. He had assiduously studied his Bible, but forgotten Christ, the Holy Spirit and activities.

The first of the sacred triad of our life hopes is God's Bible—for light of *what* or *how* so indispensable, and on its own premises, so all-sufficient and so all-exclusive! And behold the proffered substitutes for it. Here is the Roman Church, pushing to the front its priests and rites and side-tracking the Bible; and with what spiritual success? Let the deplorable mental, moral and spiritual paralysis of southern Italy, Spain and South American States make answer. And then in all ages outside the Church, and in this versatile age within the Church, we note the rationalistic exaltation of man's nat-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ural inborn "religious consciousness"—not to be sure in fact his thought, but his sentiments, not his reason, but his impressions, and these for first discrediting the Bible, and then as furnishing a substitute for it. Soon, however, these to "perish with the using"; for when men like the prodigal come to themselves, when men either as individuals or communities *realize*, when the great life exigencies of sin or grief or duty or sickness or death appall, like the mighty-minded John Stuart Mill, in his unassuaged anguish of bereavement at Avignon, they cry for higher, holier light than any to be found in themselves, or any other men. Yes, this old rationalism in its new guises, repudiated at once by God and man, will in any new dawning of the day or arising of the day-star, vanish again from the Church, and, in due season, at last from the earth. Meanwhile the men of liberal thought have become a spectacle to men and angels. They boast complacently that their science and criticisms have discred-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ited the divine authority of the Bible as a volume, and as to all particulars indeed, except a few chosen ones endorsed and made authentic by their own diversified vagaries. So they discard our Saviour's divinity, miraculous birth and deeds and vicarious death and resurrection. "But let us now hold to His ethical teachings and example—and perhaps resurrection," they are saying. By what testimony? What do we know of His words and works, having no authenticated and reliable record? The lunatic who sawed off a branch on which sat his friends, over whom he gleefully exulted as soon to be sprawling in helpless discomfiture below, forgot that he sat on the same branch and outside the saw, and soon was seen groveling in the very humiliation and discomfiture which he had so cheerfully predicted and provided for the others. When the Bible is dispensed with, it is totally gone in its reliability, and any one man's exceptional specialties of light and hope are gone with the rest, and no

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

weak and fantastic dreams of a sinful and morally deranged man can reclaim them. "Let us cast the Bible on the dust-heap or in the waste-basket—but hold—let us each, after all, for life and immortality, according to the passing fancy of each, fish out the Truth, and so live, and help to live."

. In the *Outlook* of September 23, 1905, Jacob Riis gives a beautiful and most instructive translation of Jorgensen's "Strand from Above." From a tree above, an enterprising spider had let himself down to the hedge below by a firm, well-anchored strand, to which he skilfully attached the web of his future home and occupation. As he prospered he grew exacting and self-important, and one overcast and depressing evening he inspected his strands. "At the farthest end of the web he came at last to a strand that all at once seemed strange to him. All the rest went this way or that—the spider knew every stick and knob they were made fast to—every one. But this preposter-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ous strand went nowhere—that is to say, went straight up in the air and was lost. He stood up on his hind legs and stared with all his eyes, but he could not make it out. To look at, the strand went right up into the clouds, which was nonsense. The longer he sat and glared to no purpose, the angrier the spider grew. He had quite forgotten how on a bright September morning he himself had come down this same strand. And he had forgotten how, in the building of the web and afterward when it had to be enlarged, it was just this strand he had depended upon. He saw only that here was a useless strand, a fool strand, that went nowhere in sense or reason, only up in the air, where solid spiders had no concern. . . .

‘Away with it!’ and with one vicious snap of his angry jaws he bit the strand in two.

That instant the web collapsed, the whole proud and prosperous structure fell in a heap, and when the spider came to, he lay sprawling in the hedge with the web all about his head

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

like a wet rag. In one brief moment he had wrecked it all—because he did not understand the use of *the strand from above*.”

To any thoughtful man the “strand from above” is the only reliable cord of light and hope to depressed and straitened humanity, and when in the pride and wantonness of human conceit this, in the repudiation of the Bible, is wilfully snapped, the spiritual disaster is complete.

In the precarious voyage of the soul, the captain who looks into the hold of the ship for either the stars, or the telescope of his own rude and guess-work construction, will be stranded. After remarking, “A secular journal in England received in the course of three months nine thousand communications from people seeking for light on the religious question”—“never before has there been such a crisis in the history of belief”—Prof. Goldwin Smith—himself a comet and not a star—writes: “One clergyman it seems denies the



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

infallibility of the Bible and treats the Church as an association for general improvement. A second finds in the Bible inaccuracy and worse. A third professes to believe only so much of the Bible as commends itself to his judgment—the three eminent clergymen, it is to be feared, are sliding down a slippery incline, on which no permanent foothold is to be found.” Yes, and sliding “not alone” in their unbelieving or self-believing temerity, and the third is sliding down just as unmistakably and fatally as the others.

In the preface of his book, “The Inner Light,” Dr. Amory H. Bradford says: “The teaching of the book may be condensed as follows: There is in every man light sufficient to disclose all the truth that is needed for the purposes of life; that light is from God who dwells in humanity, as he is immanent in the universe; therefore the source of authority is to be found within the soul and not in external authority of church, creed or book. That light

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

being divine must be continuous; it will never fail; it will lead into all truth and show things to come; and it may be implicitly trusted." He then proceeds to show that the Bible and the men of the Church are not to be trusted. Of the latter he asks: "Is not the Church composed of men? Are not men always limited and fallible? By what process do fallible men when brought together into a society become infallible?"

Yes, and the question at once arises: By what process do fallible men like Dr. Bradford and his liberal friends become infallible? As he truly declares, the Churchmen are limited and fallible, and yet in fact they have ever had and have now all the advantages of Inner Light and spiritual indwelling that Dr. Bradford has, and if these men of the Church are not an authority, wherein appears *his* reliability, in anything in which he repudiates or distrusts the Bible? The record of the men of the Church is conclusive against them, he says. Is the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

record of liberal thinking any more attractive and convincing?

To take a single specimen from the writings of R. J. Campbell, of the London City Temple: "Sin itself is a quest for God—a blundering quest, but a quest for all that. The man who got drunk last night did so because of the impulse within him to break through the barriers of his limitations, to express himself, and to realize the more abundant life. His self-indulgence just came to that; he wanted, if only for a brief hour, to live the larger life, to expand the soul, to enter untrodden regions, and gather to himself new experiences. That drunken debauch was a quest for life, a quest for God. Men in their sinful follies to-day, and their blank atheism, and their foul blasphemies, their trampling upon things that are beautiful and good, are engaged in this dim, blundering quest for God, whom to know is life eternal. The *roué* you saw in Piccadilly last night, who went out to corrupt innocence and to wallow

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

in filthiness of the flesh, was engaged in this blundering quest for God."

Other quotations—not equal to this extraordinary specimen indeed, but going to show that "liberal" men are no more to be trusted as ultimate authority than the Churchmen—might be given, and given from the pages of the *Outlook*, of which Dr. Bradford is one of the editors. The fact is, this delusive cult is based on a sentimental egoism which can be expressed at a distance in books and articles, but not face to face with men and facts in a pulpit. Dr. Bradford is much too faithful to his Montclair flock, and to the Chief Shepherd of the same, and to his own better self indeed, than to stand up in his pulpit to say: "You cannot trust your Bibles, you cannot trust the Church ministers or the creed-making ministers, even though they have had equally with us the Spirit and the Inner Light: but you can trust me and such as I am, with our Spirit and our Inner Light."

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

“Nor is there any way of salvation for us but unwavering and untrammelled pursuit of truth,” says Goldwin Smith—with a countless chorus of liberal echoes. True; but the pursuit of truth is with the hosts of the self-trusters—like “following conscience,” as Dr. William Adams describes it—“as a man follows a wheel-barrow which he is steadily pushing before him with all the obstinacy of a determined will.” These load up the wheel-barrow with their own negations and imaginations—push it energetically before them, and call it following the truth.

As has been well said of the “multiplied dogmas which are now asking for acceptance on the ground that they are based on the religious consciousness, and must be received because the religious consciousness is endorsing them, we are familiar with their range, their style, their coloring. They relate to the nature and character of God, to His providential and His moral administration, to the contents and

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

the claim of Scripture, to the person and mediation of Christ, to the existence and ministration of the Spirit, to the real nature of the Christian life, to conscience and duty, to the Church and her creeds and institutions, to the article of death, the state of the dead, future probation, a judgment to come, a final and retributive eternity. Men are everywhere testing these great verities of religion by their fears, their fancies, their hopes—by the dicta of their natural conscience, by the measurements of finite reason, by standards that are wholly subjective, individual, superficial, perverted through sin; rather than by the lines and measurements of the Word and Spirit of God. In many instances they set up their little social consciousness against the consciousness of the whole Church—their temporary opinions against the enduring conviction of the household of faith living on through the ages."

All the speculations and experiments of benighted, ignorant, weak, deceivable men in

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

their consummation—when they are “finished,” show that there are no substitutes for the Bible as to life’s *what* or *how*, and no Bible but a divinely inspired and so reliable one; and however self-complacent for the time, rejecters of the Bible are and are seen to be traveling in the dark, running, as has been said of a frontier railroad, “from nowhere, through nowhere, to nowhere”!

But how read the indispensable Bible? In intelligent reasonableness. How read so that we may at once honor, understand and utilize it? As a little child and a straitened, eager child, in genuine humility, never allowing our ignorance to interfere with our knowledge, which is all the more reasonable because in life and death emergencies, we are called to seek the truth. There is a vast difference as to animus, questioning criticism, and preliminary exactions of the business, between three men hunting rabbits. One for the exhilarating fun of the chase, another from curiosity in animal

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

anatomy, and the third who, hungry in the forest, is starving to death. Reason belongs often to ends—supreme practical ends—not logical self-gratifications.

What is truly rational in Bible reception may be illustrated by four American children orphaned in London through their father's suddenly returning to New York. With *reason* in full play they argue:

"Our father will surely write to us for our guidance. Having put us here he will not abandon us to the consequences of our own childhood, ignorance and experience."

When letters come, they ask: "Are these really from father? Probably they are, but are they surely, evidently so?" So they bring to bear their resources of scholarship and "criticism," examine the postmarks, many details of which they cannot understand, and the text, which varies indeed as pen, or typewriter or dictation are employed. And to their bright and rational, yet not omniscient minds, there are



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

decided mysteries, not only of words, but also ideas—mercantile and diplomatic ideas above them and evidently designed to be reported rather than utilized. But the question is: "Was father the author of the letters?" And they rationally and confidently say: "Yes," and proceed accordingly, and find their critical faith confirmed by their experience; find that all their life needs, perplexities, enterprises, mutualities and prospects are here exactly met.

Moreover their faith in the communications is additionally confirmed by the lucid and cheering expositions of an intelligent, sympathetic and affectionate friend to whom the father cables in their behalf.

Thoughtfully calculating that their father was sure to write, did write, and knew just what and how to write for their highest life experiences—though to be sure he did not always satisfy their curiosity—they thoughtfully read, and enjoy and utilize the letters.

Not all of them, though. One was forsooth

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

a young "liberal." He said he was his father's child, and equal to him in qualifications for revelations, vainly sought to induce the sympathizing friend to take counsel with him, independently of the letters, said his own personal authority was for truth higher and more "final" than they, that he had "ideas and ideals," had "found himself" and could and would "unwaveringly pursue the truth wherever it led him," and spent much of his time in criticising and denouncing the letters—except as they were subordinate to his superior thought. Not long, however—going forth to test his unfilial theories by experience, he soon came to grief, now coldly ordered to "move on," and then run over, and here in the lock-up and there in the river; day and night lost and lonely and hungry, in due time a sadder and wiser youth, he came to himself, returned home and in becoming humility lived with the others a filial life of reason corrected by reason.

One consideration never to be forgotten in

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

our own Bible study is this: God has given universal notice that in His communications to men there will be always a zone of mystery between the voice and the ear—a zone of mystery to be in silent awe respected by the listener, always an intervening, an enchanted region between the “burning bush” and the over-curious Moses “turning aside to see,” of which God in unapproachable majesty is saying: “Moses, Moses, draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground!”

God gives indeed wayside intimations of this in the very constitution of man himself, in which spiritual being mysteriously addressed by and through matter, mysteriously communicates purposes to matter. A music teacher's thought through his tongue to the pupil's ear and through the ear to the conceptions, and through the conceptions to the will, and through the will to the fingers, and from the fingers to the keys, is a familiar yet after all a startling mys-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

tery. So is telegraphic communication mysterious.

The mystery and reserve of God's communications are true universally—appearing in nature and science as well as grace and truth—all through, in all spheres, from the guidance of the terrified and helpless wild fowl, crying in the blackness of a stormy November night yet sweeping forward with unerring certainty straight for the southern goal nevertheless, to the final “well done” and “enter the joy” of a departing Christian!

And of course there are mysterious elements in the contents and the delivery of Bible truth. It is usually said that God leaves to the sacred writers their peculiar characteristics of mind and disposition, and yet overrules them to insure inerrancy, and doubtless this is true. And it is also necessarily true that God must somehow have a verbal superintendence in Scripture writing or none. This intervention of God in human diction in its impalpable mys-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

teries is illustrated continually in Christian service.

No sensitive and intelligent ambassador for Christ ever dares to preach or pray without heartfelt appeals to God to visit him, not only for the "meditations of his heart," but the "words of his mouth," as well, and every Sabbath night he thanks his Lord for words. But let him now blunder into talk about this sacred business of the "secret place of the Most High," and tell perhaps his wife all about it, and she will corner him on the spot, by asking if he imagines that his blundering infelicities are to be attributed to God. So in devout and spiritual conventions or prayer circles, Christian men and women pray for words as well as thoughts, feelings and purposes, and are sure that God regards such prayers, even though they might be cornered on the infelicities. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

that is born of the Spirit"—or taught or used of the Spirit.

Another in this divine Trinity of efficacy is the Saviour—at once supreme objective and omnipotent source.

"I am the way, the truth and the life," He said—"No man cometh unto the Father but by me"—as elsewhere, in thought, "No man goeth forth from the Father but by me"—or as Dr. Henry Van Dyke felicitously puts it: "Christ must be your door by whom you go into God, and out to man."

Prof. Goldwin Smith is an accomplished biographer, no doubt, but he can be improved upon. Of Gladstone he writes: "Let those who shrink with horror from the spread of free inquiry draw encouragement and charity at the same time from a grand example. Gladstone, as Morley's life of him shows, was to the end of his days a High Churchman, intensely religious, a believer in special providence, in the inspiration of Scripture, in the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

efficacy of prayer. Yet he could not only associate and act heartily with free thinkers, but look with satisfaction on the activity of the general conscience, and say that while there had never been an age so much perplexed with doubt, there had never been one so full of earnest pursuit of truth." Yes, and he was all that and more, too, in breadth and in depth, because as he himself says, "All I think, all I hope, all I write, all I live for, is based upon the divinity of Jesus Christ, the central joy of my poor wayward life."

From his study window, for months, this writer has watched a magnificent tree, loftily towering above all its leafy, lower neighbors, with enchantment at once to resist and utilize the tempestuous gales, that fiercely buffet it from north and south and east and west—and in such fascinating exhibition of majesty and grace that at last, yielding to a psychological impulse, he visited it at close quarters to see its *roots*. Prof. Goldwin Smith, gazing all ad-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

miringly on overtowering majesty on a higher plane, go thou and do the same!

If one may be allowed to quote from himself:—If, as the *Christian Work and Evangelist* has suggested, discussing the present “most discouraging” lack of spirituality and power in the Churches, despite such confident predictions and various endeavors, we “arouse, wake up and turn on the searchlights,” what will this wide-awake investigation almost certainly disclose? Will it not be seen that Christ as the “Head of all things to the Church” has been subordinated and displaced? Is not the “neglected Scriptural truth precisely adapted to the peculiar need of the times,” of which Dr. Strong speaks, not, as he suggests, the truth of Jesus’ social laws, but Jesus’ personal and administrative supremacy? As to this, according to New Testament declarations, is not God peculiarly and forever insistent, and according to New Testament standards, are not we, at



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

this critical period of unparalleled demands and opportunities, peculiarly delinquent?

What is the New Testament representation in this respect? "Having humbled Himself and become obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name." And he has supremely exalted him, it is to be ever remembered, not only absolutely for our ascriptions, but administratively for our surrender, our conformity, our "following" Him in all things within and without. And what is more, upon this exaltation of Christ all the moral forces of God's divine nature and all the executive forces of His divine government are concentrated, and for this unqualifiedly pledged. And we may be sure that this, as a law of God for His children and His Church, is forever unchangeably imperative.

Says Ruskin, "God will put up with a great many things in the human heart, but there is

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

one thing he will not put up with in it—a second place.” Nor any more will He abate His heavenly, His parental zeal, and put up with a second place in the Church for Himself as represented by Christ. And whenever or wherever—and whatsoever their ecclesiastical or philosophical excuses—men or Churches have said, “We do not *primarily* care for a man, no matter what Christ is to him or he is to Christ,” they have had, so far forth, to part with God. The purpose and prayer, “Lord, I will follow Thee, but suffer me first to enshrine my own or my forefather’s controversial opinions,” have never been accepted or tolerated of God.

But how is this normal and imperative law to be interpreted, accepted, applied? The answer for saints is exactly in the injunction which saints, as to the Saviour, give to sinners: “Accept Christ at once and fully. Then, as surrendered to Him as the Head of all things, in faith and love and will, the Holy

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Spirit will at once inspire, and then answer your imploring cries for his ministries, and open to you the Scriptures, that you may believe them, and formulate them, and obey them, and proclaim them. So shall you 'hear the voice of the Son of God' and live!" And to this correspond the theory and practice of the early Christians, and by this are explained their exalted holiness, their lofty intellectuality, and spiritual fellowships and worldwide conquests. Christ was to them not only, as they said, a "Saviour," but a "Prince" (the Arch-Leader). In their enthusiasm, alike as to what He was for their adoration, and in what He was to them in experience—as not only "All," but "in all"—no language can exaggerate their flaming passion of thought and heart for Christ in His God-appointed preeminence, nor their experiences and successes in consequence of it. Not since the days of the apostles to this year of 1903 is there on record the failure of a single man or Church undertaking life within or life

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

upreaching or life outreaching, by this plan of God. Christianity never faileth; but whether there be ecclesiasticism, it shall fail; whether there be philosophies, they shall cease; whether there be "standards," they shall vanish away. "All things" belong to the "body" as it is true to the "Head"! Facts—facts are here. In fact, if taught of God, he has cried in adoring humility, "He must increase, but I must decrease," "He is preferred before me," and in the all-satisfying ecstasies of faith and love: "This my joy, therefore, is fulfilled, to bear the Bridegroom's voice"—if he has gone up, awed but in the invited "boldness," before him to whom is "glory and dominion forever and ever," and when in love he laid his right hand upon him in the saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last," believed it, and returning from his prayers, has lived it, whether he was John the Baptist, or John the Evangelist, or John Chrysostom, or John Wycliffe, or John Huss, or John Calvin, or John Knox, or John Bunyan, or

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

John Wesley, or John Hall, he was not only "conqueror and more than conqueror" in general, but so far forth, was by the Spirit of Truth guided into all truth, to know it, to love it, to feed upon it, to formulate it, to share it, to proclaim it.

If the twentieth century Church does indeed "arouse herself, wake up, turn on the search-lights and engage in the work of rigid self-inspection" in the manifestation of God in Christ Jesus, can there be in any quarter the least doubt that to-day Christianity unqualifiedly accepted will be Christianity unlimited in power?

And here are briefer testimonies from higher authorities. Dr. Parkhurst: "We are not going to reach Church unity by dropping, all of us, to the dead-level of doctrinal 'don't care,' but by rising to the positive altitude of mutual coherence in a loved and living Christ."

Henry Ward Beecher (whose primal element of power all through was in his personal pas-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sion for a personal Christ): "I bring this Christ to you this morning—my Master, whom I have proved, and who has given me victories innumerable; hopes that light clear forward to the grave; faith that reaches sheer across the abyss, and illumines the city beyond. That Saviour who has fulfilled to me a thousand times His promises in sickness, in poverty in former days, in cares, in fears, in anxieties, in self-condemnations, in aspirations—that Saviour of whom I can say, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth'—I bring Him to you."

Dr. William H. Furness, Unitarian of Philadelphia: "I flee to Christ as to a rock amid storm-tossed billows, and find in him a foundation for Faith in God and for Hope for man—a foundation which neither the dismaying speculations of science, nor the unsolved mysteries of Being can disturb."

George James Romanes: "Science is moving with all the force of a tidal-wave toward faith in Jesus Christ as the world's Saviour."

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Dr. David Gregg: "My fellowmen, give the Church a man with a Christo-centric creed, and you give it a man who will keep the pulpit from becoming archaic, and who will make it a leading power in the world. He will be a man with an effective creed."

Prof. Tholuck: "From the age of seventeen I have always asked myself, 'What is the chief end of man's life?' I could never persuade myself that the acquisition of knowledge was the end. Just then God brought me into contact with a venerable saint who lived in fellowship with Christ, and from that time I have had but one passion, and that is Christ and Christ alone."

Robert B. Buckham: "It is to Him that all past ages and history itself has been pointing with an unmistakable hand; the Old Testament of the Bible is but the prophecy of His coming; and without Him it is worthless; the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old in Him. His character, His personality, His humanity,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

His divinity, He Himself, is the great central figure of all time, and nothing can dim the unfading beauty of His image, or remove the gracious remembrance of Him from the memory of man. It is Christ that has won the heart of mankind, and not His precious works and priceless precepts solely. It is upon Christ that our hope and trust for the future are staid, not upon the observance of any law or custom, no matter how excellent. Sun, moon and stars may be forgot, but never the crucified Saviour of mankind."

Dr. Samuel T. Spear (formerly editor of the *Independent*, and conspicuously "strong" rather than sentimental, in a farewell address to the Presbytery of Brooklyn): "Two years ago I lost my wife, who for half a century had been as good a wife as ever a man loved and lost. One year ago I lost my only daughter, who cared for my declining years; and five months ago I lost my only son, and I was left a complete wreck in my family and social life. Be-



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sides, in the same period I have had two attacks of typhoid fever, the last one confining me to my room for three months, and from which I never hoped to recover. In all this sorrow I have been led to study the Bible as never before, and especially all it says of Christ, and my soul has received such a vision of Christ as I had no idea of before. All the ambiguities and dubiosities about Him, which trouble many church members and some ministers, have been cleared away. Christ is to me as clear an object of thought, of faith, of affection, and a Being to be served as a personal friend, as plain to me as you, Brother Foote (pointing to the Rev. Mr. Foote, in the front pew). I lie down with Him, I rise up with Him, I sleep with Him by my side, I walk with Him, I know Him as I never knew Him before and as I never should have known Him but for this terrible crucifixion of affliction."

Dr. Burdett Hart: "St. Paul aggrandized Christ. By a fiery eloquence that tamed heathen

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

mobs and charmed cultured assemblies; by an impassioned zeal that despised danger, that counted all things loss, that he might gain glory for Him whom he served; that threw away gems as though they were baubles, gems of fame and learning and proud life and wealth; by a courage that made him calm and self-poised before Agrippas and Cæsars, and bore him through storms of the elements and storms of infuriated enemies, as though all were smooth and serene; by a loving and loyal devotion that fused every faculty in its white heat, and absorbed every possession in its burning endeavor, he placed that Name on high, and bore it over seas and land, and proclaimed to men of every speech, to refined Greek and rude barbarian and conquering Roman, their common debt to one divine Redeemer. He knew no other name. His loyalty had but one supreme object, to make Christ great in the world, to aggrandize Him everywhere; he cared for nothing else, he lived for nothing else, and he would die for

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

nothing else. As always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. Who is there of us who stands with St. Paul in this? As the recording angels make entries on the great books of God, what do they find to be true of your life and mine? Has Christ been supreme with us in our thoughts, in our purposes, in our affections, in our work?"

The third consideration for the realization of apostolic Christianity in the twentieth century, is in a due regard for God's Holy Spirit—alike for personal experience, and the polarization, organization, unity, purity and efficiency of the Church. Practically the one supreme question of the Christian and the Church to-day is: What are the conditions of the Holy Spirit's characteristic efficiency?

And first, His efficiency is indispensable. Dr. Alexander Maclaren, of Manchester, in an inspired and inspiring address at Edinburgh, on the true "Evangelical Mysticism," says that,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

"Its controlling principle is not only evangelical, but central to all truest and highest Christian faiths and life," that it may be defined as "the direct union and communion of the Spirit of God and the spirit of man," that the doctrine of the New Testament on this subject is unmistakable, and is embraced in three particulars: First, the imparting of the divine life to the believer by the Spirit in regeneration; second, the indwelling of the Spirit of life in the believer for sanctification and assimilation to God; and third, the outworking of the Spirit through the believer, for a new manifestation of God to man.

Dr. Maclaren argues that for all these life results, the Holy Spirit's ministries are indispensable. As a reviewer sums it up, "Here is the corrective alike of ritualism and rationalism. We shall learn that all true worship is spiritual, not formal, and that faith recognizes truths and facts that reason cannot demonstrate. We shall learn that spiritual criticism

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

is the antidote to all excesses of literary or historical criticism, and rest in a persuasion of Scriptural authority that is born of the Spirit's inward witness." Then, "What a grand effect on ethics! The secret of the highest morality is spirituality. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not. Nothing makes sin so abhorrent as the inward revelation of a holy God indwelling and making the body his own temple." Furthermore, "What high motives inspire the life under such conditions! What indifference to mere salary, human applause, worldly ambition, scholarly distinction, when the being is pervaded with God's presence!"

As there is "none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" than the name of the crucified Jesus Christ of Nazareth, so there is none other power under heaven given among men whereby we must be regenerated, sanctified, restrained, impelled. There is in all the universe no skilful hand but that of the divine Spirit of Holiness, which can

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

restring and tune the broken "lute within" and then—to allure the lost and wandering, charm the weary and hopeless, thrill the worker and warrior—play it.

Dr. Ambrose Shepherd, of Glasgow, first asks why it is that with so much machinery and activity in the Churches, there is such deplorable lack of spiritual results—and then answers, "The reason why so much of the prayer, toil and sacrifice of the Christian Church counts for little or nothing, is because so many of us are living on the wrong side of Pentecost. Many of us know Christ; many of us are following Christ; but how many of us have claimed our own Pentecost, or have sought at Christ's hands that equipment for service without which all other equipment counts for nothing—that Holy Spirit of God in the heart—that vital living power which is to the Christian what genius is to the artist, and without which, whatever his technique, there is no soul? Our clamant need is the fulness of the Spirit.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

For what harder work can there be in the world than to get spiritual work out of an unspiritual Christian?"

"Out of an unspiritual Christian"—yes, and as an editorial in the *New York Tribune* shows—he had best not try. First, argues this secular authority, the Holy Spirit to the human spirit, and then operations!

"Whitefield," it says, "who a hundred and fifty years ago began this preaching in the open air, had a message to speak; it tore his soul and would not be quiet. When a church was denied him, he went to the fields. 'My Lord,' he cried, 'had the mountains for His pulpit and the heavens for His sounding-board; He sent his servants into the highways and hedges.' He was surrounded by thousands—peeresses in their coaches; old scholars from the seclusion of the colleges; 'the poor colliers came from out of their coalpits in swarms, the tears making white gutters down their black faces.' The sound of their voices, praising God, was heard

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

afar off like the thunder of the sea. In those days, as on that of Pentecost, thousands were converted unto God. Why do we see nothing like this scene in our modern camp meetings? There are souls crying out to be saved in New Jersey as there were in Spitalfields. Life is as awful in its import, death as near, and the Helper, the only Helper, as ready to stretch out His hand. What is wanting? It does not seem to us, outside secular observers, that it is a Whitefield, but Whitefield's spirit that is lacking. Secular observers and secular newspapers are entitled to speak in this matter. When any movement is made which offers to lift us all into a higher life, those whom it offers to help have the right to judge it, and to decide whether it does its work or not. If men profess to make Christ and His gospel more honorable in the world, we warn them that they need Whitefield's spirit. Whitefield was a man possessed with his message. . . . The voice of one man thoroughly on fire with love for his Mas-



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ter would pass through this conventional machinery, like an electric shock through lifeless matter. Christians who set going this mechanical enginery may be mistaken as to the reality of their own zeal; but the world is never mistaken. The world cries no longer 'Lo, here is Christ,' or 'Lo, He is there.' It begins to doubt if He is anywhere. To such of our readers as mean to show Him this month, we urge that they make ready not by writing a fine sermon or preparing cold meats, but by betaking themselves to their knees humbly to find out whether they themselves know Him. Afterward, unless He has given them a message to the world, let them keep silent. Let us have no sermons and prayers in these camp meetings, that come not from the heart. We can talk politics or sing Pinafore with the brain and mouth; but it is only when the soul itself speaks that we should try to teach God to others."

Men are saying, "The Church is weak because of worldliness, materialism, Sabbath

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

desecration, feeble preaching, diminished attendance." The truth is the Church is never weak from any enmity or disability or disadvantage without. The Church and the pulpit are always weak, and fatally delusive as well, in the absence of the Holy Spirit within.

And not only altogether essential, but altogether adequate, are the ministries of the Holy Spirit. Not a debased and obdurate sinner, not a degenerated, lean, lifeless Christian, but can by the omnipotent Spirit be "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light" and for the society and service of God, on the way to it. There is no benighted soul in any possible darkness, without, within, but His light, His all pervading, all penetrating light, will thoroughly illuminate it. Earth hath no sorrows that He cannot heal, no adversities that He cannot reverse.

"I shall be satisfied," cried the Psalmist, "when I awake in thy likeness," and there is no spiritual slumberer but the Holy Spirit can

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

even now and here awake him, mold him to the divine likeness, and satisfy him for this life.

Moreover, He can adjust us to each other and give unity. Says Bishop A. Cleveland Coxe: "To illustrate my ruling ideas, viz.: First—We must drop all references to Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc., in our meetings, and look on each other simply as fellow Christians. Second—The Holy Spirit will reconstruct when we thus come down to elemental relations. He only can give organic unity." He only can, but He *can*, banish from hearts and organizations the prepossessions and prejudices, that preclude organized Christianity.

And then He can bring the Christian and the Church at any period into line, into harmony with the changing spirit of the times. Bishop Wescott was right—"The voice of the Spirit will come to each new generation, as it has come in past times, through the circum-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

stances of the age in which it becomes articulate."

Fairly invoked, the Holy Spirit of God never fails, never disappoints.

But what are the conditions of the Holy Spirit's efficacy—over us, within us, through us? "There are none," is the answer often given, and in circles highly orthodox, too—an answer in which is concealed the most pernicious heresy of Christendom.

"Ever since Pentecost the Holy Spirit's influences are like an atmosphere all about a Christian and a Church—and you do not have to pray for them," it is said, and so the deadly notion goes abroad, that so long as one is a Christian—no matter how neglectful of prayer, or thought, or work, or God, or man, or self—all is well because the graces and operations of the all-sufficient Spirit of God are for us insured in any event: and, so, many of the "very elect" are stealthily deceived into the most deplorable indolence and presumption.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Of course we do not have to pray for the Pentecostal descent of the Holy Spirit again, neither does a Christian have to pray to be adopted. But the law of God, announced in His Word, and all history, and all experience, is, that for His child to have the heavenly gifts of sonship, he must pray, and this whether he can understand the reasons for and the philosophy of the divine arrangement or not, and in fact only those who do importunately ask in prayer and supplication, do abundantly and adequately receive. The same is true of the personal operations of the Holy Spirit. These, in fact, are conditioned upon the importunate prayer of faith and energy—as declared in the word of God, with universal ratification in the providence of God. One of the most lamentable exhibitions of confusion of spiritual thought and sentiment, where there should have been only the most radiant certainty, appeared in this respect in some of the recent revival services. Listening penetratingly you would hear,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

“Of course you must all earnestly pray; ‘Prayer moves the arm that moves the world’; no work of grace obtains without much prayer”; and then in an “aside” undertone, “And yet this is the dispensation of Pentecost and of course He is and will be with us—there is no need to pray for the Holy Spirit.”

Now the propriety, necessity and success of supplications for the gifts and operations of the Holy Spirit have been recognized by saints of power all down the centuries, from the Apostle Paul to Charles Hodge and Evan Roberts. Says Dr. Hodge in his incomparable lectures: “Hence the prayers so frequent in Scripture, and so constantly on the lips of believers, that the Spirit would not cast us off, would not give us up, would not be grieved by our ingratitude or resistance, but that He would come to us, enlighten us, purify, elevate, strengthen, guide and comfort us; that He would come to our households, renew our children, visit our churches and multiply his con-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

verts, as the drops of the morning dew, and that He would everywhere give the Word of God effect." Discussing the erroneous idea that the Word has inherent power, he writes: "It is inconsistent with the command to pray for the Spirit. Men are not accustomed to pray that God would give fire the power to burn or ice to cool. If the Spirit were always in mystical, indissoluble union with the Word, giving it inherent divine power, there would be no propriety in praying for His influence, as the apostles did, and as the Church in all ages has ever done and continues to do."

And this of Evan Roberts: "He tells the people frankly that they must pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit—that they do not need *him*"; and again quoting him: "For five months before the revival began, I had prayed agonizingly for the Holy Spirit. Each day I spent from three to eight hours in prayer. Before that I had been a sound sleeper; but beginning in May, 1904, I awoke at one o'clock each

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

night, and prayed sometimes until four A. M. and sometimes until nine A. M." (However, it is to be remarked, a normal and genuinely intense importunity does not constrain a man to rush hysterically into nervous prostration.)

Yes, definite prayers for the Holy Spirit's ministries are appropriate—and more, most urgently demanded.

Considering the practical importance of prayer and the representative office and position of the ministry in its relation to the general field of spiritual operations, it may in a sense be truly said that the hope of the Church and world is referred to the simple question: "What is the average minister in his study at eight or nine o'clock A. M. doing—what is he preferring?" Look at him; what an interesting objective for urgent applications he is!

Here is an illustration in the general prosecution of Church activities: "Work for the Kingdom in our own Church"—five distinct objects. "Work for the Kingdom in our com-



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

munity"—six objects. "Work for the Kingdom as organized by our denomination"—seven objects. "Work for the Kingdom in general"—thirty objects. Several years ago at Andover, the calls upon the future ministers, as to social economics alone, were formulated under the divisions of "The Social Evolution of Labor," "The Treatment of Crime and the Criminal Class," "Pauperism and Disease," with twelve urgently important topics under each division. Then pastoral cares and calls, family and household engagements, the claims of general literature, then general pulpit preparation—then special pulpit preparation—all plausible, legitimate, exciting applications. And may he, can he, must he resist them all? *For his life*—his life personal and as before God and before men—he *must* resist them all, until the personal call of his God and his Saviour is first of all and fully regarded, alike as to time and thought! The secret of his life, in the holiness of it, and joy of it, and the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

power of it, is, in fact, hidden in his deafness and blindness to anybody and anything, until the voice and vision of his God are fully regarded. At the beginning of the day, one of the alternatives for our choice is the intimate personal fellowship of God Himself, with the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, the light of God irradiating our intellects, the power of God transforming from the image of the earthly to the image of the heavenly, thought, affection and will—all these, not as in a celestial and transitory experience only, but to be clearly and effectively and permanently manifested, on our return to earth.

As all concede in theory, and few realize in experience, the combined duty and privilege—the wisdom of the minister in his study is here: Duly emancipated, first of all, to surrender unconditionally to the Holy Spirit to be by Him in thought and heart taken up to heaven to stay there—until Christ Himself—after His personal society has been, in the opportunities

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and bliss of it, in appropriate fulness duly enjoyed—until Christ Himself pronounces upon him the dismissal benediction of his return.

"I look back with horror upon my neglect of secret prayer," writes Norman McLeod. "I wish I had prayed more," with demure pathos murmured a servant of God, as dying gave him a mountain-top view of life—voicing the regretting thought of ten thousands, who living or dying, have gained at last a height from which the office and power of prayer are realized in heaven's light.

Says Austin Phelps—what everybody knows but everybody easily forgets: "No large growth in holiness was ever gained by one who did not take time to be often and long alone with God." Yes, and "no large growth in holiness," from "being often and long alone with God," was ever gained without the most determined and indeed heroic struggles to attain it.

It seems the easiest thing in the world, for

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

a Christian, having shut to his door, to pray, but in truth we all do "believe" Coleridge when he says: "Believe me, to pray with all your heart and strength, with the reason and the will; this is the last, the greatest achievement of a Christian's warfare on earth." And this is all the more remarkable because prayer belongs, not only to a man's heaven-reaching relation, and the promises of God, but to his own subjective nature.

To quote Dr. Theodore B. Hyslop: "As an alienist and one whose whole life has been concerned with the sufferings of the mind, I would state that of all hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depressed spirits and all the miserable sequels of a distressed mind, I would undoubtedly give the first place to the simple habit of prayer. Such a habit does more to clean the spirit and strengthen the soul, to overcome mere incidental emotionalism, than any other therapeutic agent known to me."

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Two or three years ago, in certain circles of evangelistic effort, it was quite the fashion to quote the story of a German professor, celebrated for his prayers, and of the surprise of certain students who had slyly arranged to overhear him, when in weariness at a late hour, he closed his book, he simply said: "Good-night, Lord—on the same old terms!" and went to bed. From which it was, in effect, argued that we need not be specially concerned about our prayers, because God would surely "do His part," and hear and answer "any old prayers."

If, however, the professor was indeed a man of extraordinary habits in genuine prayer, he could indeed appeal to the gracious and kindly Master in the weariness of an emergency of faithful service, and say, "Good-night, Lord—on the same old terms"; but only as in the freshness and liberty of the early hours he had habitually and enthusiastically preferred Christ's society to his own solitude, with much

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

of time and concentration of thought devoted to the preference.

The gifts of Christ and the ministries of the Holy Spirit are never cheap. In this, too, God having offered Himself, will not take a "second place." Moreover, since the law of life and of God demand emphasized prayer at whatever apparent sacrifice, it is a comfort to remember that while thus "absent from the body" to be "present with the Lord," the Lord Himself will surely take care of the neglected interests. He sendeth "none a warfare any time at his own charges." He calleth and detaineth none any time at his own charges.

When called by the Prophet to turn his back upon the subsidy which he had already paid over to the proscribed Israelites, Amaziah, king of Judah, bewails: "But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel?" To which the man of God replies: "The Lord is able to give thee much more than this." And He was. And the God

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

of Israel having opened the Throne of Grace and ordained prayer, is able to countervail any disadvantages incurred by His servant, His child, in his steadfast purpose to intently "see His face," and so returning, to "serve Him."

Prof. Pritchard, of Oxford, asked if science and scientific thinking tended to unsettle religious faith and devotion, replied: "It is *pre-occupation of mind* rather than science that is and always has been the prolific parent of scepticism and religious indifference." Yes, science and criticisms and "new thought" may have slain their "thousands," but the "preoccupation of mind" which for the ministers and others has precluded the appointed prayers, has slain its "ten thousands."

The condition of the Holy Spirit's controlling and sanctifying visitations—and hence the condition of due practical regard for the Word and the Christ, is in emphasized prayer, as in fact it is also for the heroism which is to accompany and flow from the three-fold theism.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

But what of the heroism? It is never to be forgotten that no religion of the head or of the heart can be acceptable to God or valuable to man, unless it reaches and actuates the hand. No true saint can be an idler. In the highest sense it is true that the Christian has got to "work for a living." New Testament Christianity, in the graces of it, the joy of it, the triumphs of it, depends upon activity—yes, and heroic activity. Here is indeed the heroism of noblest achievement, from highest motives—Godward, manward, inward—with most unselfish devotion and untiring exertions.

When a man enlists in the service of the Police or Fire Department of a large city, or in his country's army or navy, it is always with the understanding, that if occasion require, he shall exhibit himself in downright heroism. The same is true of enlistment in the cause—the Kingdom of God, with the additional specification that "occasion will surely, regularly require"; but with this unspeakable consolation,



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

too, that in his experience, the theism will care for the heroism! In all the activities of the New Testament Christian; God in His Word will enlighten; God in Christ will inspire; God in the Holy Spirit will perform; and always, first and last, God will unfailingly reward!

Reference has already been made to the separate efficiency of the separate means. But the theism and heroism, duly combined, give in every case the most transcendent and ever gratifying and unfailing results of an entire Christianity—in literally “Good tidings of great joy which shall be to *all people*.”

From the first century to the twentieth, no Christian whose mind has glowed, and whose heart has burned within him, from the Word of Christ, received in adoring worship of Christ, with filial longings and importunate applications for the Holy Spirit, to make him true to Christ, with heroic consecration to Christ—no real Christian has ever failed in happiness or holiness or mission or hopes, be he layman or

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

minister or missionary—living or dying, anticipating the “unseen world,” embarking for the “unseen world.” Moreover, no aggregation of such men in Church or society has ever failed in respect of unity of purpose, or harmony of opinion, or brotherly love, or the prosecution of the corporate enterprises, or the realization of the common aims.

In view of all this, is it not evident that the sectarian who wilfully overloads the Church, the “Body of Christ,” and the rationalist who devitalizes it, are equally an astonishment, if not an offence before earth and heaven at once?

The boasting of the denominationalist is usually the exultation of a fat man over a dead man—confusing his fat with his vitality; or of the lunatic who mistakes his excrescence for his heart, and cherishes the one and neglects the other. Mr. Beecher used to pour out his denunciations upon any person or institution that “stood between a man and his oppor-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

tunity." His resurrection and return are now in order that he may, with characteristic eloquence and power, arraign the denominationalists who stand between men and communities and their Christianity, in the apostolic emancipation and fulness of it.

And here are the liberals, with lance and sabre, prancing up and down the glad—the vernal premises of a full and eternally triumphant Christianity, spearing and slashing away at the saints, under the banners of sociology and ethics, blind to the Christianity which has supreme ethics and sociology and "all things" beside.

"We are living to-day in the midst of a great dissolution," cries Dr. Crapsey—not particularly as a mourner, however, and apparently more in exultation than tears. "We are living to-day in the midst of great dissolution. We are standing by the death-bed of a great religion." If this is one of the great denominations that he is talking about, as in extremis,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

very well; but Dr. Crapsey cannot point to a single fact or factor of Christianity, which, in so far as it is Christian, indicates any single aspect of debility—not to say death. The New Testament Christianity has not only power for all performance, but all emergencies—vitality for functions and for perpetuity. It is like its reigning Source and Objective; in omnipotence “the same yesterday, to-day and forever.”

Moreover, this New Testament plan in its sufficiency will provide in due fulness and due limitation, too, for “doctrine,” and “creed,” the expression of doctrine. No sane man ever cries out against plan for performance, architecture for construction, quadrature for navigation, science for prescription, or philosophy for discovery; and no thoughtful—no “scientific” man in the field of religion cries out against “theology,” “creed,” “doctrine.” Yet as a possibility and indeed as a deplorable certainty the Churches may and do have delusive and mischievous superfluity of creed.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

To stand for doctrine formulated for life is scriptural and rational. To fight over doctrines born of hereditary notions is madness. That there is such madness, not of a mild form, not readily yielding to treatment and not hid in a corner, everybody knows.

The practical adequacy of the New Testament conceptions, for not only code but creed, not only duty but doctrine, is continually illustrated. A few years ago, the *Sunday School Times*, while edited by Henry Clay Trumbull, and very clearly and very nearly exhibiting a New Testament Christianity, gave a novel and striking illustration of this. In commenting on "The determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," and "To do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done"—of the Acts, the *Times* drew the sharp criticism of the former editor of the *Christian Advocate* for its Calvinism. Whereupon the *Times* quoted from various Methodist commentators on the same lesson—and behold, they

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

were more Calvinistic than he had been. As the Methodist narrator of the story remarked, "There's where he had us."

Christianity can take care of its creeds without any help from the denominations.

Furthermore, these New Testament Ends and Means give the only basis for Christian or Church unity. The various "Federations" have remaining in them the seeds of inevitable ultimate disagreement. The elements in the denominations which keep them from organic unity will keep them from harmony and efficiency in Federation unity. There is, in fact, for Christians no unity worthy of the name but unity in and from and for Christ Jesus. Heaven will not endorse any other, earth will not accept any other, the Churches cannot realize any other.

Just now the various Churches are furnishing for those who have eyes to see, a graphic illustration of all this. The grand projects for Church union in Canada have halted. The

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

union of Congregationalists, Methodist Protestant and United Brethren is recommended by committees, but from the determined opposition of prominent Congregational pastors and Churches is evidently hopeless.

The Presbyterianism of the nation presents an awkward and painful spectacle of here, repudiation of all union, and there, sharp dissensions in consequence of union, and grave doubts of the practical results of union already consummated.

The one plan of Christian unity is already partially on exhibition in the Young Men's Christian Associations. There is not an ecclesiastical establishment on the face of the earth that can for a moment compare with these in this respect, and for the reason that in spirit, and approximately in organization, they are Christian and not sectarian.

And now, what in this twentieth century is the New Testament Christianity waiting for but this—definite organization?

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

No enterprise in the interest of a unique and urgent cause which has principles to be advocated and applied, a message to be delivered, forces to be made effective, a creed to be assimilated for life, can be prosecuted without specific organization. Moreover the organization must be most discriminately and sharply centralized in a very few essential particulars. With the notorious limitations of human time and thought and energy and temper and resources, no organization can accommodate many factors or any idiosyncrasies.

But is it said the formulations here will be difficult? Not very. It may take time. "Everything takes ten years," Abram S. Hewitt declares, and this reform may take ten years—but it is entirely feasible. A thousand voices protest. "Church union is desirable but not feasible." Oh, yes, it is feasible. For one thing, "it is in the air." Dr. U. S. Bartz writes: "Happily it is no longer necessary to try to prove that organic Church union is con-



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sonant with the will of Christ. If anybody doubts it, he must be a pessimist indeed as to the progress of the Spirit's influence upon the Body of Christ. Church union is so much 'in the air' that the religious atmosphere must be considered either highly salutary or woefully noxious."

Let the Christian men and women who burn with Bible zeal for God and men, first take an airing up and down lower Broadway and Wall Street, and watch radically differing men co-operating with tremendous energy and triumphant successes in organizations strictly trimmed to ends and means. Then let them take a keen look at the Young Men's Christian Associations, at home and abroad; then Northfield; then the Moody Church at Chicago; then the Honolulu Union Church; then the Messrs. Keigwin, Baragwanath and Hartley, in union services in New York.

What means it indeed that pastors, Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist, with their

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Church officers and members, in the very heart of wide-awake and positive New York, in Christian fellowship and coöperation, unite in everything pertaining to the New Testament faith—Bible knowledge, deeper spiritual life, salvation of the lost, purification and uplift of the community, celebration of the Lord's Supper—everything?

It means that what "man has done" temporarily and locally and despite denominational embarrassments, "man may do" permanently and extensively and in the full "liberty of the children of God," boundlessly.

And what means this record of the Central Union Church of Honolulu to which was called several years ago, Rev. William M. Kincaid, a Presbyterian of Minneapolis? "It is an unique religious body, possibly the only one of its kind in the world. It is founded upon the most liberal basis, five simple facts forming its creed. It owes allegiance to no denomination or sect, but is an organization by

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

itself. Among its members are included families from the Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian Churches. It is the oldest and largest church in the Hawaiian Islands, and, in fact, has founded nearly all the other churches there. In its membership are included five hundred families, practically all the English-speaking people in Honolulu, and all the Government officers.

The church is a remarkably strong and aggressive body. Mr. Kincaid says that its organization is the best that he has ever known. A new church building, with a seating capacity of two thousand, has recently been completed at a cost of \$130,000, all of which has been paid. The church is free from debt. An idea of its strength and liberal policy may be gained from the fact that in the last year \$9,000 was raised for the expenses of the parish and \$30,000 for charitable and mission work.

The Central Union Church owns a steamer, which goes out every year to the Caroline and

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Philippine Islands and among the other islands of the Hawaiian group, carrying missionaries and supplies for the work in those islands. A large number of missionary workers are entirely supported by this church."

It means that at home and abroad in the sanctified wisdom of men delivered at last from the "malignancy of a false perspective," and the ever reconstructing energy of the God of the New Testament, the "Dream of the dreamer who dreams that he dreams" will soon be a twentieth century reality, with ecclesiasticism and denominationalism, in the fires of God, first dissolved and then crystalized, to reappear in the consummate composition of Organized Christianity!

### CHAPTER III

BUT what are the special hindrances which in the past have precluded and in the present delay the realization of organized Christianity?

To which the answer is, the three Prides—Pride of Rationalism, Denominational Pride of Ecclesiastical Power, and Denominational Pride of Creed Opinion.

The Pride of Rationalism has obtruded itself upon the Church in all its history, and now as always, invoking discoveries and conjectures of science—often falsely so called—and the results of critical studies usually destructive, is set to minify that which is heavenly and divine, and magnify that which is earthly and human. Just now it boasts great things on the basis of everfluctuating scientific and critical conclusions, and meanwhile is hard to define and

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

discuss, because under various tokens of "Liberals," "New Theology," "The Scientific Method," "New Thought," etc., its disciples take rank all the way from pantheism or atheism across to the gates of orthodoxy.

This, however, may be said of it: it utterly fails to "make good."

This is true even of a reasoning intellectuality, to which with this variegated cult, everything is ultimately referred.

The liberal ranks number, no doubt, scholarly and eloquent men, but for us and our house, give us still in preference, for pure reasoning intellectuality, Thomas Chalmers, Charles Hodge, Richard S. Storrs, William E. Gladstone, Charles Parkhurst, Joseph Cook, and a kindred host.

Then the poetic sentimentality on the throne of thought and reason!

Take the factor of sin as in man and society and before God. "Fools make a mock at sin." These wise men ignore it—as God has por-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

trayed and man in fact knows it, outside and inside. They sentimentally call it "a misfortune or disease, or a necessary condition of attaining perfection—a fall forward," while universal facts overwhelmingly confirm the Bible representation of its hateful vileness, its leprous meanness, and reason as well as Scripture, declares that if at all God be God in holiness and ideals, it must be supremely abhorrent to Him. Furthermore in the way of relief from it, reason coincides with Scripture and through Wilhelm Herrman, for example (who, "in obstinate rationality, is a master in logic and philosophy, and deals with realities and not with words"), declares: "It is quite right that men are unwilling to let go the thought that redemption has been won by the vicarious sufferings of Christ."

The palpably urgent illustrations of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," the depravity of human nature, are open to view on every hand,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

in every region, every rank, and have been in every age.

What is this that a thoughtful writer in a secular magazine lately told us of a mother in Fez—not exceptionally degraded—who offered, for a gold-plated watch, to sell to him, out and out, her twelve-year-old daughter—a noble child, whose picture the writer gave? What sow or she-bear would have done this?

Lately in France, when from a railroad collision many Americans were hurt, and some in and under broken cars crushed and bleeding, a family in an uninjured car pulled down the curtains and locked the doors, lest the rescued wounded and dying might be brought in. What Newfoundland or St. Bernard dog would have done that?

Here in New York we have, to be sure, under the direct or indirect constraints of Christian civilization, frequent exhibitions of unselfish and heroic manhood (often only half appreciated), on the part of our firemen or police-



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY.

men, to excite our admiration for what man may be and do, but all about us, none the less, are the illustrations of the most villainous depravity, in the most infernal meanness, as to men and children and especially as to women, and Bible and facts declare the sin of the human heart—and rational intelligence accepts the demonstration—even though it may be pleasingly sentimental to reject it.

Says Duc de Rochefoucauld: "In the adversity of our best friends, we often find something which does not displease us"; and Edmund Burke: "I am convinced that we have a degree of delight and that no small one in the real misfortunes and pains of others." Henry Ward Beecher noted the same disposition surviving even in Christian hearts, as to the failings of others, and declared that he would not stop to say that it was "unchristian" because it was "infernal"!

Behold this sentimental girl in a New York criminal court room. She knows that govern-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ment and law are real and repugnant to crime. She knows that the judge on the bench represents law and righteousness and justice, and is called upon by facts and principles alike, and by the safety, stability, welfare of society, to pronounce severe sentence upon the already convicted prisoner in the cage, who has been indeed guilty of the most deliberate, cruel and dastardly murder from the meanest motives. But she declares that having "found herself" and having "ideas and ideals," now from her own "interior consciousness," she knows that the justice, with whom she is acquainted as a kind and loving father, will never, never, never sentence a fellow man to death! Still he does, and the miscreant goes to the electric chair just the same, and the susceptible party discovers that unreasoning sentimentality does not dominate the universe—and cannot any more interpret it. And there be editors and ministers, not a few, who, resembling her in theories,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

may well profit by her experience, and share in her enlightenment.

But not only in what Carlyle calls "the damnable consciousness of no sin," do the liberals fail of intellectual reasonableness, but as to all the deeper facts and principles of earth and heaven.

St. John asks pertinently: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" Correspondingly: He that misses and confuses the laws and facts of the earth, that he hath seen, how can he independently interpret the laws and facts of the overruling heaven, that he hath not seen?

Men talk about the "Fatherhood of God." What do they know about the Fatherhood of God, or any of the profound realities of His earthly or heavenly administration, without a revelation from Him about them—what ever from their own "interior consciousness," which

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

has notoriously no more abiding validity than "a dream when one awaketh"?

Even Herbert Spencer recognizes a present need for a prospective and revealed heaven, and says: "The prospect of heaven makes life tolerable to many who would else find it intolerable. In some with shattered constitutions and perpetual pains, caused perhaps by undue efforts for the benefit of dependents, the daily thought of a compensating future is the sole assuaging consciousness. . . . And there are many who stagger on under the exhausting burden of daily duties, fulfilled without thanks and without sympathy, who are enabled to bear their ills by the conviction that after this life will come a life free from pains and weariness. Nothing but evil can follow a change in the creed of such; and unless cruelly thoughtless, the agnostic will carefully shun discussion of religious subjects with them."

Yes, and a hope of heaven is necessary, not only to many "with shattered constitutions and

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

perpetual pains," who "stagger on under the exhausting burden of daily duties," but to every man, and not only the expectation of heaven, but the present daily ministries of heaven, and then for these, reliable information about heaven. As to all these, man's need and ignorance are coextensive and liberals cannot enlighten him as to either realities or conditions. No, "the new understanding of the subconscious realm of mind," whatever else it can do, cannot give the faintest clear token of heaven's existence or attractions or present contributions, or ultimate terms of admission, and liberals who attempt the spiritual guidance of their fellow men, are "cruelly thoughtless," indeed.

The liberal who reaches the summit of his religious faith, in the ethical teachings of Christ as edited and interpreted by his own "interior consciousness," cannot make good any promise of light, as to the law of God, or the love of God, or the heaven of God, and is sharply re-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

buked by Renan himself, who says: "Candidly speaking, I fail to see how, without the ancient dreams [of evangelical faith] the foundations of a happy and noble life are to be relaid. . . . The ruin of idealistic beliefs may be fated to follow hard upon the ruin of supernatural beliefs, and the real abasement of the morality of humanity date from the day it has seen the reality of things." Nothing in fact is plainer from causes in God and man alike, than that with the "ruin of supernatural beliefs" all spiritual forces and hopes for mankind will have been, in our recognitions, forfeited forever.

In fact, the liberal cannot make good for his own spiritual needs. Says Dr. Pentecost: "One of the most distinguished scholars of the advanced school of Higher Criticism frankly confessed to me that his conversion and present peace with God were based on the vicarious and substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, and that even now in daily asking for the forgiveness of sins

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

he always appealed to the divine sacrifice of Christ, as Evangelicals understand it. At the same time he declared that he could not himself preach that gospel, on account of its unphilosophical and unscientific character."

And who that has attended the services of any but the most ice-bound of the new thought preachers has not seen and heard and felt the same incompatibility between rationalistic theories and experience?

According to the testimony of God and autobiography alike, for life and the love of God, mind and heart are both rationally enlisted. William Alexander's saying: "That the true crown of any soul in dying is Christ, not genius, and is faith, not thought," is far better rendered: The true crown of any soul in dying or in living is Christ and genius, and is faith and thought. In this duality within, true men must ever live and hope and preach and die. They cannot ultimately quit the track of Christ

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and faith, however temporarily derailed by thought and genius.

Furthermore, as already hinted, liberals break down when personally before God. If these men prayed as they publish, we should hear familiarly: God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, according to their own penitential testimony, inadequate in mind, unstable in heart, fluctuating in affections, and in their state and activities, dependent on Thee, and the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit. I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, imploringly calling upon Thee for power to pray and praise and preach, and contritely asking for grace in view of failures and mistakes in the past; or even as these poor humble traditionalists, who believe in Thy Word and say they are "earthen vessels," with all "excellency of power" from above them. I, having ideas and ideals and reliable self-consciousness, am self-sufficient and equal to the situation, above and around and within. I



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

praise Thee for my power and privilege to sit in judgment on Thy Word, and to be surely accepted of Thee in my rejections and limitations of its contents. I thank Thee for Christ's life and words, and my intellectual competency for critically culling from them and finally interpreting them for myself and others. I thank thee that I have vision, and not only detect the laws and facts of heaven, but know intuitively and exactly and fully how to pray for myself and others, and this without distraction or volatility of thought or feeling, and how to preach from highest, holiest motives, with precise and most completely successful adaptation to the hundreds of men, women and children, in all the variations of their thought, feeling, experience, relationship, privileges, duties, destiny. I thank Thee for my "inner light" and its all illuminating adequacy.

Something like all this we should hear from liberal preachers, if they prayed consistently. But they do not and cannot so pray, because

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

the soul is abashed in the presence of its God, and the soul's conscience, which unlike the thought "consciousness" of which they boast, is real and regnant, and before God—as He is addressed face to face, forbids it and as St. Peter would say, "puts to silence the ignorance of foolish men." Not a man of them all can in the light and intimacies of a personal audience with God comfortably pray for ten minutes, with his soul satisfied in respect of either conceptions, sentiments or expressions. All enlightened men either pray vertically, and in the exercise keep away from God, or praying horizontally, approach Him as Evangelical Christians do, with the deepest self-abasement, until Christ is sighted, and the heavenly music detected—"Grace doth much more abound," and then the most triumphant joyfulness, in the closest intimacies of filial faith and love!

Moreover, liberals fail to make good their claims, on any ground, for a separate existence.

The *Outlook* of Sept. 14, 1907, criticises cer-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

tain denominational weeklies for censuring men like Dr. Gordon, of Boston, C. E. Jefferson, Josiah Strong, and Presidents Faunce of Brown and Taylor of Vassar for being identified with the "International Congress of Religious Liberals," at Boston, in September. Is this criticism sound? Well, that depends. If six Unitarians invite an Evangelical to become a seventh, and man a life-boat to rescue the shrieking passengers of a ship, pounding to pieces on the outer bar; if in a railway wreck a Unitarian proposes partnership in the urgent business of prying and dragging out the maimed and dying and dead; if a Unitarian physician or philanthropist invites an Evangelical to aid in extirpation of disease, or in feeding the hungry, or in "Sunshine" work, he is weakly and wickedly silly who would refuse from any scruples of orthodoxy. But suppose now that there is no emergency in the case, and there are possible and actual, two institutions for the help of men for ethical and socialistic

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

work on the same territory. Here is one, a purely ethical and human institution (even though quoting the supposed ethical teachings and example of Christ), yet boldly announced as including all things of the Christian religion. Here is another, a Christian Church indeed, resting on the New Testament basis—having due regard for Christ and holiness and fellowship and also the highest possible enterprises for the relief and uplift of men—all with due theism and heroism—with the ethical work of course as grandly effective as God Himself, being duly invoked, can make it. Now if the Rev. C. E. Jefferson and his Evangelical associates, having the choice, prefer the former of these institutions, they are open to admonition from the ranks of orthodoxy, and is it too much to say?—to criticism from all intelligent men.

No doubt they would consistently patronize “Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus,” which have indeed some superficial factors in common with the “waters of Israel,” if they

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

could do no better, but if the banks of God's own Jordan are open to them, will they not surely hasten hither, and there abide, as in a more congenial situation for themselves, and others depending upon them?

They can display their energies, to be sure, in a remote corner of the camp of Israel, if there be no Tabernacle or Holy of Holies, but not this consistently, if the corner is in rivalry with the heaven-lit center, and the Holy Place of God is slighted in the experiment.

With a modern Moses and God on the one side, and Aaron and his fellow liberals complacently rehearsing: "These be thy gods, thy ethical gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt"—on the other, as they build ethical altars and with "new thought" and the "scientific spirit," anoint *themselves* High Priests, New Testament Christians belong over with Moses and God.

Says the *Outlook*: "Certain denominational weeklies not realizing that religion unites where

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

theology divides, have attacked these men," in which are two mistakes; one that New Testament religion consists in ethics, and not in theism and heroism as including ethics, the other, that the "Theology" of hereditary denominational notions is the only alternative set over against liberalism.

The vanity, and indeed, the stark madness of our new attempt to substitute human maxims of culture, morality and the virtues, for the "Old, Old Story," are most impressively illustrated in the career of Dr. Thomas Chalmers. During the first twelve years of his earnest and able ministry, as his biographer writes, "Although his nature was genial and benevolent—though he had his chosen friends and longed to elevate his parishioners to a higher level of intelligence, and domestic comfort, and virtuous enjoyment—he had not discovered any Being possessed of such paramount claims, and overwhelming attractions, as to make it end enough to live and labor for His sake. But

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

that discovery he made while writing for an encyclopædia an article on Christianity. The death of a relation is said to have saddened his mind into more than usual thoughtfulness, and whilst engaged in the researches which his task demanded, the scheme of God was manifested to his astonished understanding, and the Son of God was revealed to his admiring and adoring affections!"

On page 205, Vol. IV of his "Select Works," occurs his eloquent avowal of this change, from which the following is an extract:

"I cannot but record the effect of an actual, though undesigned, experiment which I prosecuted for upward of twelve years among you. For the greater part of that time I could expatiate on the manners of dishonesty, on villainy of falsehood, on the despicable arts of calumny; in a word, upon all those deformities of character which awake the natural indignation of the human heart against the pests and the dis-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

turbors of human society. It never occurred to me that all this might have been done, and yet every soul of every hearer might have remained in full alienation from God. . . . But the interesting fact is that during the whole of that period in which I made no attempt against the natural enmity of the mind to God, I certainly did press the reformations of honor and truth and integrity among my people, but I never once heard of any such reformation having been effected among them. I am not sensible that all the vehemence with which I urged the virtues and the proprieties of social life had the weight of a feather on the moral habits of my parishioners. And it was not till I got impressed by the utter alienation of the heart in all its desires and affections from God; it was not till reconciliation to Him became the distinct and the prominent object of my ministerial exertions; it was not till the free offer of forgiveness through the blood of Christ was urged upon their acceptance, and the Holy Spirit



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

given through the channel of Christ's mediation to all who ask Him, was set before them as the unceasing object of their dependence and their prayers, that I ever heard of any of those subordinate reformatations which I aforetime made the earnest and the zealous, but, I am afraid, at the same time, the ultimate object of my earlier ministrations. You have taught me that to preach Christ is the only effective way of preaching morality in all its branches; and out of your humble cottages have I gathered a lesson which I pray God that I may be enabled to carry, with all its simplicity, into a wider theater."

Says Dr. Charles Parkhurst: "When a preacher says that the fundamental fact in Christianity is not conversion to a personal Christ, but conversion to the humanitarian work that Christ came to do and encourage, he is giving the direct lie to facts as the Gospel states them, to the truth as Christ declared it, and to the Spirit as the first disciples exemplified it."

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

The Pride of Rationalism just now so variously in evidence, as substituting man's culture, thought and schemes of reformation, for Bible religion in its glad entirety, is indeed one of the Hindrances to the Organized Christianity of the New Testament—though, to be sure, of short duration. It is really a recrudescence of Judaism and not Christianity. Human nature, with Emerson, cries: "If you want to raise me, you must stand above me"; and men, awakened men, eagerly demand what God immutably assigns—heaven-given Christianity.

Meanwhile, with life so short and God so urgent and man so straitened, does it not seem a pity indeed that journals like the *Outlook* and *Independent* and measurably the *Homiletical Review* and *Christian Work and Evangelist* should devote so much time and such noble gifts to an enterprise which has no *raison d'être* whatever, and in which things delusively partial are substituted for and inimical to the di-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

vine fulness of God's family and redemption love and plans?

. But what of Denominational Pride of Ecclesiastical Power? New Testament Christianity, after world-wide triumphs, "through much tribulation," for three centuries, was betrayed into the hands of ecclesiastical ambition, and until the Reformation, remained in bondage, with every factor of its ends and means perverted to the ingenious purposes and ambitious pretensions of the Roman hierarchy. Our Saviour was indeed recognized in theory, but in fact, according to Mark Twain's observations afterward, usually presented in subordination to the Virgin Mary, the reigning Pontiff, some favorite cardinal, some canonized saint, and then as an infant in arms.

Development of spiritual character was such as officiating priests with official benedictions and ceremonies could effect: Fellowship, not of Christ's sanctified followers as such, but punctilious church members as such: Works ac-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

cepted and rewarded, not so much as they honor God and avail for sinning and wretched men, but as they celebrate the sacred persons and promote the religious institutions of the Roman Church: The Bible held back from at once the personal "search" of the people, and the rational and scientific "criticism" of reverent scholarship; The Holy Spirit efficacious only at the pleasure and in the rites of priest or bishop.

And with what results? The results which always follow when men usurp the prerogatives of God—weak and beclouded intellectuality and conscientiousness in high places; vice and ignorance in low places; civic corruption and "graft" in the state; God and His Church dishonored, and man in sin and misery neglected.

Says Dr. Charles Parkhurst: "In this connection it occurs to me to wonder whether we, who claim to be thorough-going Protestants, are not treating Catholicism, and the system of moral dry-rot that Catholicism is bound to engender, with a gingerliness that even the most

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

generous liberality of Christian view is no sufficient warrant for. Granting that we are under obligations to treat with deference the religious views of others, we have no business to treat with any degree of consideration a system nominally religious that is nevertheless leaving, and everywhere leaving, a religious and moral blight behind it. The proper purpose of religion is to produce the finest type of personal manhood and womanhood. Religion is not good for anything, as religion, unless it will do that: and the Catholic religion—by which I am understanding of course now the Papacy—is not doing that, and has not been doing it for centuries. The very thing that Protestantism is laboring to construct, Catholicism is calculated to do nothing but destroy. The Papacy is not christianizing the world, but dreligionizing it. In confirmation of this we have only to look at Spain, Italy, France, Belgium. The more operative the Catholic Church has been in any country, the worse the condition it

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

leaves it in. There is no use in blinking these matters. Facts are facts. Roman Catholicism, as at the present administered, is an incubus upon the body, mind and conscience of every nation and every institution that comes in any measure under its influence and despotism."

But strange to say, the Pride of Ecclesiastical Power is wonderfully fascinating after all. As usual with the multitudes, and to an astonishing degree even with intelligent thinkers, preposterous claims in the name of religion with no ultimate validity whatever—whether of Catholic or Episcopalian or Christian Scientist or Mormon—will marvelously carry the day, if adroitly formulated and then solemnly and persistently asserted.

So one is interested to read in Cardinal Newman's "Apologia," of Hurrell Froude—to the end an adherent of the Church of England: "He professed openly his admiration of the Church of Rome, and his hatred of the Reformers. He delighted in the notion of an hier-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

archical system, of sacerdotal power and full ecclesiastical liberty. He felt scorn of the maxim, 'The Bible and the Bible only is the religion of Protestants,' and he gloried in accepting tradition as a main instrument of religious teaching. He taught me to look with admiration toward the Church of Rome, and in the same degree to dislike the Reformation. He fixed deep in me the idea of devotion to the blessed Virgin, and he led me gradually to believe in the Real Presence. He was powerfully drawn to the Medieval Church, but not to the Primitive." Precisely, and for thirteen hundred years, almost the entire world of religious thought was "powerfully drawn to the Medieval Church" and dominated by it, but just the same, the Primitive was and is, the New Testament Church before which in the twentieth century, the Medieval institution with all its pretensions and attractions, is doomed to pass away.

Indeed, since the Reformation it has lived

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

on "borrowed time," with its glory departed, and "Ichabod" distinctly traceable on its fading and diminishing banners. It is still boastful but moribund. Moreover, very much the same may be said of its daughter, the Church of England, which even now, in its ecclesiastical aspects, sits precariously, as an ambitious, subservient, melancholy deck-house on the splendid hull of English civilization, under distinct notification of eviction for trespass.

The ante-Reformation Pride of Ecclesiastical Power has been feebly projected over to the present day, but New Testament Christianity, the "Primitive" Church, will soon, in the twentieth century, repeat its conquests of the first century, and Pride of Ecclesiastical Power in a modern churchman will go the way of Pride of Ecclesiastical Power in the ancient Church of the Scribes and Pharisees. To this the present-day *Zeitgeist* of religious liberty, nobler political forces, new intellectuality in all ranks and regions, the Bible itself and the ominous pre-



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sagings of the Christ-kingdom, are already powerfully contributing. Says Mr. Beecher: "I give you fair notice of my intention. I will attempt, as I have attempted, to put down ecclesiasticism, here and everywhere, as not in accordance with the highest plane of Christian experience, nor with the best interpretation of the New Testament, nor with the dictates of the Holy Spirit as poured out upon the hearts of God's people everywhere."

Since the Reformation, however, the paramount affliction of the Church, the subtle tyranny at the front, by which organized Christianity has been specially repressed and postponed, has been Denominational Pride of Creed Opinion. Immediately after the Reformation, instead of uniting in the name of Christ for a resurrection and rehabilitation of the Primitive Church, instead of a Protestant organization on a New Testament basis for the ends of Christianity by New Testament means, the Protestant leaders, in their pride of intellect,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

began to fight over dogmas of doctrine and polity, and have been intrenched and assiduous in belligerent or rival camps ever since.

For four centuries, losing sight of the essentials of the New Testament, as furnishing the scriptural and scientific basis of organization, and with vigorous thinking and elaboration over the non-essentials, the denominationalists have enshrined these at the various centers, and essaying the transcendent campaigns of Christianity with a hopelessly divided army, have calamitously failed of conquest and character, both at once.

And with what controlling animus? Pride—the self-complacent notion, that having arrived at a religious conclusion, each man was privileged to establish and worship it wherever he pleased, and as devoutly as he pleased, and as exclusively as he pleased, which is indeed the essence of denominationalism.

From first to last it has been indisputably manifest, that the four New Testament ends

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

of Christianity could be surely, triumphantly, universally and always attained by the four New Testament means, yet Christian men of every variety, in all the years have insisted upon repudiating the divine scheme at the instance of their hereditary pride of opinion, in consequence of which, instead of a united Church of Christ for Christ, there are in this country more than one hundred and forty Protestant denominations, with thirty of them active and self-asserting, as in evidence in Federation or Students' or Missionary Conventions, none of them pretending to special intelligence, holiness or efficiency—only “We are entitled to our opinions like the rest—and enjoy promulgating them,” they say.

Take the Presbyterians: You ask one of them the grounds for a separate denominational organization. Will he point out to you any monopoly of or indeed any practical advantage for any of the ends or means of Christianity? Whether you quote the three root

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

peculiarities of Presbyterianism: Parity in the ministry, ruling elders and church courts—or more widely, its doctrines and polity, can he point to any facts or necessary principles which attest its superiority, not to say monopoly, in any good thing?

Take the Church of to-day. Can your Presbyterian conduct you to any scene of experience or work and exhibiting the rare attainments or triumphant operations of some Five Point Calvinist, show that if James M. Buckley or some other well-equipped Methodist had been there, the results would have been wholly different?

Does ever, anywhere a Presbyterian, standing up in any community, proclaim: Behold, because of our Presbyterianism we surpass all the other Christians here in honor of Christ, holiness of character, power in the world and acceptance with God?

“But our forefathers through the years have attested their devotion to these standards, for which they were ready to forego all things,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

even life, and these they have bequeathed to us as a sacred heritage." Now these Presbyterian forefathers have been the theme of hundreds of special occasion sermons, and are worthy of a little special attention. In the first place, any number of worthy, level-headed men will die for any doctrine or system which they have espoused, when they are attacked and "get mad." So a "Wee-Free," or any of the "Split P's" of Scotland, or a Southern Presbyterian, would be beggared, or die, sooner than recant. This, however, while it attests the polemic spunk of the party, proves nothing whatever as to the validity or value of his peculiar views.

This writer has a Scotch friend who used to swear at Revision of the Standards, and we all know that a man, from early education, may adhere with enthusiastic steadfastness to the specialties of Presbyterianism, and yet neglect the central Christianity and be a godless, useless, even pernicious man.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

In fact, in the crises of their living or dying, the great men of denominational Church history, who have been heroic and true, and "witnessed a good confession" before God and men, have uniformly attributed their triumphs and their hopes to the *ends* and *means* of New Testament Christianity, with evidently their denominational peculiarities—a passing accident of their experiences.

All the Presbyterian orators know perfectly well that if in any testing, trying experiences of any great Presbyterian's religious life, a John Wesley or some other Methodist, true to and full of God in His Word, and Son and Spirit, had been substituted for him, the record would have been just as conspicuously glorious.

Under summons to "Come up Higher," through an incurable disease, Joseph Addison Alexander, of the Princeton Theological Seminary, the most accomplished scholar the American Church has ever produced, walking up and down his study, was overheard to recite

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

with all the fervor and appropriation of a little child :

“Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that thy blood was shed for me,  
And that thou bid'st me come to thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come !

“Just as I am, and waiting not  
To rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,  
O Lamb of God, I come !

“Just as I am, though tossed about  
With many a conflict, many a doubt,  
Fightings within, and fears without,  
O Lamb of God, I come !

“Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind ;  
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,  
Yea, all I need, in thee to find,  
O Lamb of God, I come !

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

“Just as I am—thou wilt receive,  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;  
Because thy promise I believe,  
O Lamb of God, I come!

“Just as I am—thy love unknown  
Hath broken every barrier down;  
Now, to be thine, yea, thine alone,  
O Lamb of God, I come!”

And in this he presented a representative picture of all God's great Presbyterians in all the centuries. They were attached to their Presbyterianism, but in any crises of duty or experience, they appealed to Christianity, just like an intelligent and spiritually-minded Methodist or Independent, and were never disappointed.

Several years ago in opposing Revision, Prof. William Brenton Greene, of Princeton, penned this characteristic and plausible statement: The Confession “is the banner under



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

which the Presbyterian Church has conquered. She has become the power that she is in foreign and home evangelization, and as the champion of both religious and civil liberty, through devotion to its principles."

What section of its principles? In fact, the Christian section, irrespective of the sectarian section, and in some respects, in spite of this, indeed.

All which calls up a scene of athletes on a race track. Instead of "laying aside every weight" and giving their vital forces the fullest opportunity in the highest liberty, these in madness of antiquarian subserviency load themselves up with "grandfathers" overcoats and boots, and after a fashion, to be sure, run; then, afterwards, congratulate themselves: "We had power and were champions because of our devotion to our forefathers' outfit."

When Ernest Renan—right for once in his life—declared that Calvin succeeded in his work as a reformer "because he was the most

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Christian man of his age," he uttered a generic truth, pertinent to all Calvinists.

It is highly edifying to hear Dr. William H. Roberts, the erstwhile chief apostle of Presbyterianism in this country, at a "Brotherhood" Convention last year, in discussing the topic, "The Presbyterian Church—what it stands for," present in answer the following points:

"1. Loyalty to the priceless American heritage of individual liberty and popular government.

"2. The right and duty of every Christian to be a worker for Christ.

"3. The spiritual character and purposes of the Church, as Christ's agent for the salvation of men and the regeneration of the world.

"4. The unity of the Church, emphasizing the need that Christians should strive not against one another, but with one another, for the doing of Christ's work in the world.

"5. That a living Church must evidence its life by its evangelistic and missionary work.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

"6. That the supreme duty of the Church is loyalty to Jesus Christ and to the Holy Scriptures as the law of Christ for both faith and conduct." To which he added: "May all these things abound increasingly in our midst as a Church; may they permeate with increasing power all Christian Churches!" Even so, but just this is New Testament Christianity, and is most appositely prophetic. Just this will indeed characterize the Presbyterian Church when it has unloaded its water-logged hull, and casting overboard its superfluous wares, has gracefully floated up to the water-line of Evangelical Christianity. So will it indeed realize "what it stands for."

Then here are for the Church, rejoicing in its new and true ideals, additional considerations, indicating its coming uplift for duty and opportunity, and corrective of its Pride.

It is perfectly fair to gauge any Church by its relation to the "Great Commission." Do Presbyterian Missionaries or visiting Secre-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

taries return to this land to report anywhere the splendid conquests of purely Presbyterian ideas of truth or polity or plan, as set over against the inferiority and failure of Methodist, Baptist or Congregational missions? Does any one recall a single instance of this?

Then redemption work at home—what is this report of what Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman, the General Assembly's special Evangelist, is saying in the Federation Convention?

“He spoke thrillingly on Interdenominational Evangelization, which he believes to be the only potent method of evangelization. It is vastly easier to make Christians than Baptists, Methodists or Presbyterians. The one is the gift of God; the other mainly a matter of birth or argument. Denominational evangelization cannot arrest the attention of a city; no single denomination can control the force of the church and its whole force is needed to shake a city. Every denominational revival awakens prejudice somewhere; work for Jesus and not

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

for the denomination, and prejudice is gone and the city moved. Four years of evangelistic work along these lines have made Dr. Chapman look forward with confidence to a great national revival."

For three years he said he had conducted his campaigns, trying to make men Presbyterians and failed, later he aimed to make them Christians and succeeded—which, being in the interests of accuracy, corrected, means that for three years he tried to make sinners Christians by exclusively Presbyterian agencies and failed, while he succeeded as a New Testament Christian.

For years the call to Presbyterians has been, with single aim and heroic energy and apostolic spirituality and unity, to preach and propagate New Testament Christianity, and leave its Calvinism and other denominational specialties to take care of themselves amid the wholesome agitations, siftings and adjustments of genu-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ine spiritual and scriptural operations. To do this ought not to require much faith.

Where is the blessed magician, who can take Dr. Charles Hodge's Lectures, and putting them on a potter's wheel, remold them until the doctrines of Christian Ends and Means have been manipulated up to the glowing apex and the Presbyterian specialties duly gyrated down to the base—not necessarily entirely off the disk, however?

Dr. Archibald Alexander Hodge, after his father, Professor of Theology at the Princeton Theological Seminary, may be appropriately quoted at this point: "Each of these parties hold all essential truth, and therefore they hold actually very much the same truth. The Arminians think and speak very much like Calvinists when they come to talk with God in either the confession of sin, or the supplication for grace. They both alike in that attitude recognize the sovereignty of God and the guilt and helplessness of men. Indeed, how could it be other-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

wise? What room is there for anything other than essential Calvinism, on one's knees? On the other hand, the Calvinist thinks and speaks like the better class of Arminians, when he addresses the consciences of men and pleads with them as free, responsible agents to repent and believe in Christ. The difference between the best of either class is one of emphasis rather than of essential principle. Each is the complement of the other. Each is necessary to restrain, correct, and supply the one-sided strain of the other. They together give origin to the blended strain from which issues the perfect music which utters the perfect truth."

Then again: "This matter of free-will underlies everything. If you bring it to question, it is infinitely more than Calvinism. . . . I believe in Calvinism and I say that free-will stands before Calvinism. Everything is gone if free-will is gone. The moral system is gone if free-will is gone. You cannot escape except by Materialism, on the one hand or Pan-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

theism on the other. Hold hard, therefore, to the doctrine of free-will."

In all this, feasibility and solution are suggested by this simple comment of Prof. William C. Wilkinson's: "In characterization of Mr. Punshon's published sermons and addresses, it deserves to be said, first and most emphatically, that they are throughout 'all compact' of gospel pure and undefiled. The note of absolute loyalty to Scripture is everywhere clearly heard, and it is as clearly everywhere the dominant note. To the lover of evangelical truth needing no flavor of 'advanced' thought to commend it to his relish, this character in Mr. Punshon's utterances is an immense-satisfaction. Mr. Spurgeon himself was not more straightly orthodox than was Mr. Punshon. Barring the difference between them of Calvinistic and Arminian, the two men preached one and the same gospel, and together bore agreeing testimony to the inspiration and authority of the Bible as being throughout, from



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Genesis to Revelation, the unmingled Word of God."

Says an editorial in the *Southern Presbyterian* of South Carolina: "We would not go the length of saying that all theological differences are unimportant. But the important ones are not those which divide Arminians and Calvinists, but those which divide unitarians and trinitarians and those which divide the papacy from Protestantism. The Arminio-Calvinistic difference cannot affect any soul injuriously, except as it is made to do duty as a cause for division. The Arminians sing and pray Calvinism. The Calvinists frequently preach and practice Arminianism. Take the labels off them and their own mothers would not be able to tell them apart, very often."

And hear Dr. R. F. Coyle: "Splits and schisms and separations are a reproach which cannot be too soon taken away from our Presbyterian churches. No amount of fine, theological thinking can make it right for us to be

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

apart. Calvinism is no more synonymous with Christianity than John Calvin is synonymous with Jesus Christ. The Confession is not the Bible; the Genevan is not the Galilean."

So when the question arises: Why is not Presbyterianism duly fused into Organized Christianity? the answer is: Denominational Pride of inherited opinion.

But study now this Baptist.

Of course at the outset he is embarrassed by his opponents. These, like himself, in an Old Testament bondage, drag the unsettled particulars of rites and ceremonies up to the height and moment of the New Testament Spirit and Truth and Life.

The practice of infant baptism may be said to be Scripturally appropriate, and there is no doubt at all that when parents "full of faith and the Holy Ghost" and the love of Christ and prayers, dedicate their children to God with the outward sign of their Christianity, they are accepted of Heaven—sign and dedication both.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

But the usual "arguments" for infant baptism would carry almost any rite or regulation of the Old Testament over into the New, unless it was definitely prohibited—tithing or poverty of the priests for example. So the Baptist may be a little excused for his sectarianism, until there is a grand striking of outlying sectarian tents for a concerted movement up to and within the central tabernacle of Christianity. Still there is no valid excuse for his separate organization on the general premises of Christianity after all. According to his own evangelical theories, these general premises are tremendously crowded and all parties infinitely straitened by the New Testament factors of Ends and Means, and there is no time or room for emphasis upon any subordinate theories or beliefs, even if sincere men do entertain, and imagine that they can logically defend them. To quote the eminent Baptist, Prof. J. B. Thomas: "We pervert the truth when we put party and sect above Christ. The most pug-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

nacious Baptist I ever saw was an unconverted man. He knew the Scriptures. He could argue long and well for immersion. He would grow indignant in his championship of our tenets, yet admitted that he was not a Christian. He never professed to be. I am sorry to say that I once heard a doctor of divinity exclaim, 'I *hope* that I am a Christian, but I *know* that I am a Baptist!' These both come under the indignant rebuke of Paul, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ!' 'Circumcision availeth nothing, uncircumcision nothing, but a new creature.' A spirit of partisan zeal mars and warps the spirit of Christianity. To say, 'I am of Paul and I of Cephas,' is practically to affirm that Christ is divided."

Very soon indeed the Baptist, in behalf of Christianity, has to abandon formulating and emphasizing ritualistic conceptions, even if in a sense Scriptural. He stands for the mode of Baptism, but can find no time or place for

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

the Scriptural physical particulars, the mode, of the Lord's Supper. He has no time or place for rules for fasting, no time or place for our Saviour's washing of feet and his sacred instruction, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

The charge against the Baptist is not necessarily, that his denominational views are erroneous, but that he comes upon the hallowed territories of God's grandest family and redemption operations, and man's desperate emergency, distracting and weakening, unnecessarily, and with strange partiality and inconsistency.

Then, too, he has had experience. At Northfield or a Young Men's Christian Association gathering, gladly, devoutly, passionately, effectively, he has studied the Bible, developed in Christian character, blessed other Christians,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sought the lost, enjoyed God and Heaven with others—intelligent, spiritual, heavenly minded, heavenly hearted Christians, as Christians. Now he returns to his denominational Church and communes and coöperates with whom, and on what basis? With Baptists as Baptists—with those who may or may not have any Christian zeal for God or man or any fellowship love for him, beyond what gives the presumption that they may be Christians and keeps them above immortality.

As a practical statement, in behalf of the Ends and Means of Christianity, God at first by His Word, and by His providence, excuses His children from rites and ceremonies, and then afterwards in the unity, and fellowship and enterprises of Christ the Head, employs them after all, to bless the one body in Christ. According to His Word and providence, God has no use for ritualistic observances in His family, in any dividing preeminence.

Most significant and substantially sound and

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Scriptural are the words of Dr. Norman Fox: "The only practicable scheme for such a union would be one which waived entirely the question, what constitutes New Testament baptism, which eliminated completely the discussion whether the use of affusion and the baptism of infants is according to Scripture. Such a plan would be found in a Church which admitted to the Church supper and to full membership any believer, *baptised or unbaptised*. If the Church welcomed to its ranks one, who, being of Quaker training, did not believe in water baptism and so had been neither immersed nor sprinkled, the Baptist member could vote to accept the person who had received only infant baptism, without thereby impliedly acknowledging that such baptism is valid. Baptism would thus be made no longer a Church ordinance, but a question of private duty, like the giving of a tenth of one's income in benevolence. The member of such a Church could privately be immersed or sprin-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

kled or have his children baptised by any one whom he could find to administer the ceremony, while the pastor of the church could decline to perform any rite in which he did not believe. In such a Church all controversy regarding baptism would be eliminated as thoroughly as from a Young Men's Christian Association.

If Congregationalists and Baptists could all be brought to see that water baptism is not made by the New Testament an essential to Church membership, that the Church of Christ should be open to all the disciples of Christ irrespective of baptism, then, though each retained its own beliefs as to what constitutes true baptism, these two great bodies could become one. There are Baptist Churches in England which are organized on this principle, and there are Baptists in America who believe it to be the principle of the New Testament."

But what of the Episcopalians as obstructing the "Way of the Lord" in Denominational



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Pride of opinion? We have already referred to their English division in its Pride of ecclesiastical power, and in so far as it is allied with Government, and as John Stuart Mill expresses it, is ‘a branch of the civil service’; but what of their denominational pride of creed opinion?

From the viewpoint of New Testament Christianity it must in all honesty be said in answer, that the Episcopal Church sins pre-eminently in this respect and with the least excuse—Scriptural, intellectual, historical or experimental. In the first place it behooves its advocates to come upon the common domain under due restraints of modest self-suspicion because as a denomination it is so very small. With all the advantages of an early start, social and political prestige, easy terms of admission, it is but one-ninth as large as the Methodist Church, one-eighth as large as the Baptist, while the Presbyterian and Lutheran each outnumber it two and a half times.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Then in comparison it is weak intellectually. President Eliot, of Harvard, was suavely polite to the Episcopal divines when he said to them: "I do not admire your intellectual frugality," but, "rebuking and exhorting" in this respect, "its own Bishops and other Clergy" protest in terms quite too derisive and scornful for these pages; which leads to the remark that contemptuous scornfulness would seem to be curiously germane to this Church, and whether it appears as between Ritualists and Evangelicals within the fold, or as addressed to non-Episcopalians and especially Reformed Episcopalians without, or from without from Roman Catholic sources, is extremely suggestive of ecclesiastical and spiritual weakness.

Moreover, beyond all other Protestant Christians, without exception, these "feeble folk" exploit their denominational pride in refusing the recognitions and coöperations of Christian unity. For the sake of the Christ, and truth and spiritual power of New Testament Chris-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

tianity, which they share in common, ministers and laymen of other denominations gladly unite with others in services and Christian work, just as far as the root interests of their respective Churches, as they conceive them, will permit. Not so these. Why? Because of their pure unreasoning Pride of denominational claims and dreams, founded upon the notion that they monopolize the authority and grace of the Head of the Church in the "apostolic and historic succession."

In 1903 the *Churchman* made public profession of its faith thus: "It is a serious reflection on Christendom at the present moment to contrast the interests and hopes founded on the institution of the Hague Peace Tribunal with the half-hearted discussion of Christian reunion. The impulse which has brought nations to acquiesce in the formation of a permanent Court of Arbitration is thoroughly Christian—while the acquiescence in sectarian division and discord is thoroughly unchristian.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

The Church is bound to follow here the leadership of the state. To refuse to do so is to cease to influence whatever stands for the best and highest elements in modern life.

Reunion is vital to the essence of Christianity. When the Christian Church realizes that this is the supreme and imminent question to discuss and to settle, she will have gone far to regain the paramount influence which by nature belongs to her. Any kind of activity treated from the sectarian point of view, is more disheartening than inspiring. To hold conferences and meetings for great Christian purposes on sectarian lines, is as ineffective as it would be to allow political partisanship to control the organs of national life."

And in 1905 recanted thus: "A correspondent asks in another column: Would you 'give up the principle and the fact of the Apostolic Succession if thereby the unity of Christians . . . could be secured to-morrow?' The question is representative, and, whether in the form

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

in which Mr. Bailey asks it or in some other, causes wide and deep anxiety whenever unity is discussed. In its broadest aspect, it is equivalent to asking, 'Shall the ministry which has been committed to the Church as a trust be given up?' The answer is inevitable that such a betrayal of trust is impossible. One cannot give up that which is not his. The Church cannot give up that which was committed to her in trust. The moral obligations of so simple a proposition cannot be escaped."

Such a disappointment! The *Churchman* in 1903 crying after (however unconsciously), and starting straight for Organized Christianity, and then in 1905 shunted off and derailed at the station of **its** own denominational and gratuitous pride!

"The principle and **fact** of the Apostolic Succession" before and above the "Unity of Christians," as Christians! The ministry "as a trust" lowered to and identified with the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

“principle and fact of the Apostolic Succession”!

Do the thinkers of the Episcopal Church realize in what a low estate this locates the ministry? The good men are sorely bestead already, with feeble fraternity, yes and fierce conflicts among themselves, with exclusive and arrogant claims advanced for them, to which, in scholarship or piety, or influence, they cannot at all respond, and here they are linked and made subservient to, the baseless dreams of “Apostolic Succession.”

But is it a baseless dream? That is what the scholarship of the world says, and what more and more the highest scholarship of Episcopacy itself says. The most eminent scholars, who are of the “succession” and having all the extra acumen it might be supposed to confer, agree with Prof. John DeWitt: “For if there is such a thing as the ‘Historic Episcopate,’ a succession of Bishops from the Apostles onward, those who belong to the succession ought

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

to know who are in the succession. What is the judgment of the Bishops, who are by common consent in this line (if there be such a line) as to the Historic Episcopate of the Anglican bodies? The Episcopal Church acknowledges the Apostolic character of the Roman Catholic Episcopate and Apostolic character of the Greek Episcopate. But has the compliment ever been returned? Has the Greek Church acknowledged the claim of a single English Bishop to a place in the Apostolic succession? It has not only never acknowledged it, but has refused to do so, though English Bishops have sought such recognition. And as for the Roman Catholic Church—is it not notorious that whenever a ‘vert’ has passed over from Anglicanism into the Roman Catholic Church, whether ‘Bishop,’ ‘Priest’ or ‘Deacon,’ he has been received as a simple layman? This is ‘the colorless light of history.’ Suppose that those whom the Anglicans recognize as Bishops in the line of the Apostolic suc-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

cession were to meet together. The Roman Catholic Bishops, including mitred Abbots, etc., would number about twelve hundred; the Greek Bishops about three hundred, and the Anglican Bishops about two hundred and seventy. This College of Bishops, according to the Anglican theory of the Historic Episcopate, is the College of the successors of the Apostles. Here is the wisdom of the Church of God. This is the one body that can 'try the spirits.' "

Says Mr. Lecky, the Historian: "Can the theory of a communion between the Latin and Anglican Churches be really maintained *though the Latin body scornfully repudiates it*, though the articles, the homilies and the early theology of the English Church breathe the most uncompromising hostility to the Papacy, though the blood of so many martyrs has attested the gravity of the separation?"

The whole contention for the "succession" is based upon the alleged vital relation of the Eng-



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

lish Church to the Roman up to and after the separation—up to the separation as a part of the old Church and after the separation as co-ordinate with it. The significant fact is however that the Trunk repudiated the Branch on both sides of the point of departure. The Roman Church even before the schism of 1532 denounced in general, any such partnership with or separation from or coordination with itself, and has done so specifically and even fiercely, ever since.

The Episcopal Church is very like a man vociferously boasting of a precious jewel and asking extraordinary credit, and claiming large concessions by virtue of it, when he can never in any way exhibit it as in his possession, and never present any documentary proof that he ever received it, while in the meantime a rival party, older and richer, comes forth, and shows the necessary documents of rightful possession, when suddenly in the light of day the treasure

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

is found after all to be no substantial jewel at all, but only a simulacrum, a delusive bauble.

The denominational Pride of the modern Episcopalian is a wonder indeed. In respect of other Protestant Churches it appears in full play of most baseless and gratuitous exclusiveness and self-assertion. Toward the Greek and Roman Churches it disappears in an almost shameless want of self-respect, in persistently courting an affiliation, so scornfully and unanimously repudiated by the older Churches.

Hear Dr. Donald, of the Trinity Episcopal Church, Boston: "Why should the Episcopal Church be ready to affiliate with the remote Greek Church, of whose spirit and work so little is known in this country, while it refuses affiliation with American Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Methodists? Why should the old Catholics receive a recognition and sympathy withheld from Protestant bodies? Why should Père Hyacinthe be received with open arms, while fellowship is refused to millions of

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

American Baptists? The Greek Church probably never gave the Episcopal Church in this country a single priest. The Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist Churches have given the Episcopal Church, bishops and clergy by the hundred. The religious and intellectual life of this country is largely identified with the history of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism, and is largely in Congregational and Presbyterian hands, and yet these Churches are held at a distance, while the Roman Church, not freed from the paganism of the Middle Ages, and the Greek Church, remote, inaccessible, and indifferent, are recognized as Christian brethren. What gives this state of things more significance is the fact that neither the Roman nor the Greek Church acknowledges the validity of the orders in the Anglican or American Churches, and that they refuse all affiliation. In other words, the Episcopal Church of to-day, as represented by many of its leaders, stands aloof from the millions of

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

American Christians who have made the history of the country, founded and controlled its colleges, created its literature and largely shaped its development, and who are in warm sympathy with the Episcopal Church, while it holds out its hands to two Churches which will have nothing to do with it, which scorn its claims, and are themselves vitiated, in one form or another, with paganism. This is a very singular situation."

Then here is Dr. William R. Huntington, of Grace Church, with his "Talisman of Unity." Listen to him: "What is meant by Church Unity in the United States? Such unity, I answer, as unites the States themselves, namely, a unity so real that it can show indisputable tokens like the flag; vocal symbols such as the oath of office and the declaration of allegiance; personal agents of administration, such as governors and magistrates; a simple platform of belief upon which all stand; and a general scheme of conduct to which those who are of

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

the Commonwealth are expected to conform themselves. Such is unity as civilians understand it; why should Churchmanship take up with any less thorough conception of what it means for a people to be one? How often we have heard it from the platforms of union meetings, interdenominational love-feasts, evangelical alliances, and such like, the cry that God never meant His people to be one in any sense that would make their unity noticeable to the carnal eye; and that absolute unity of spirit ought to be accounted entirely compatible with infinite divisibility of body. But, if that contention be correct, what are we to make of those significant words of Christ in his great intercession for the Church, 'that they all may be one . . . that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me'? 'The world,' we must remember, looks on with carnal eyes. How is 'the world,' then, to discern a unity which has no tokens?

Christendom is to-day moving upon hea-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

thedom with a zeal never before surpassed. But what of the methods and the strategy? Would you get the true answer to that question? Go not in search of it to the publications of the various missionary boards, go not to the missionary boards themselves, go not to the several legislative bodies, General Conventions, General Assemblies, and General Conferences which stand back of the boards, but go to the actual forces in the field, go to the men and women at the front; they will tell you what the trouble is. They will tell you, and tell you with much warmth, that one of the chief hindrances to missionary progress is denominational rivalry—not rivalry there, but rivalry here, not a spirit of competition and eagerness for the preeminence among the missionaries themselves, but a spirit of competition and eagerness for the preeminence among Secretaries, Boards, Conventions and Committees in these United States. Once let American Christianity begin marching upon the heathen

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

stronghold with that unity of method which the Sirdar showed in marching on Khartoum, and we shall see results worth scoring.

But marvellous as would be the consequences abroad, the practical effect of Church Unity here at home would be more signal still. It has lately been stated on high authority that less than one-half of the people of this country acknowledge allegiance to-day to any form of organized Christianity. Only a month ago, I heard the Superintendent of Schools of one of our largest cities quoted as having said that in the municipality which he represented, there were more than a hundred thousand children of school age who did not know of the existence of such a book as the Bible.

What are the most formidable of the obstacles that block the way? They are these, putting the least important first and the most important last: Vested rights of property, deeds of gift, inherited trusts, and the like; then, on another level, traditional rivalries, the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

transmitted animosities and antagonisms of other generations, and scores of burning questions, which have been acknowledged burnt out, years ago, had not a mistaken sense of duty to ancestors forbidden."

What unquestionable, momentous realities—how well portrayed!

Reading this, and knowing the exalted character and rare attainments of Dr. Huntington, as well as his usual superiority to denominational fetters, the sanguine apostle of Organized Christianity, like the mistaken Samuel as to Eliab the son of Jesse, would be likely to exclaim: "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him!" Alas not so! Instead of highest enthusiasm for Organized Christianity, for New Testament Ends and Means, Dr. Huntington presents instead the melancholy plan of a universal Episcopal Church, mainly on the ground of its being on a plane sufficiently low to accommodate the "Puritan," and the High Churchman with his "ritualistic excesses," both at once



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

—this too when all the laws and facts of the situation unmistakably proclaim, that when there comes to the now lethargic Church a revival of conscience and heaven-inspired fires of zeal for truth and life, there can be between these parties no abiding peace but in disruption.

One of the English Bishops, "at his recent diocesan conference, speaking of the Church at large, expressed his fear that the different schools (high and low) of the Church, were not likely to give way to or tolerate each other; and that unless the mercy of God interposed, the Church could not live much longer, but must go to pieces and perish. He could not see the approaching death of such a grand old Church, as the Episcopal Church of England, without deep sorrow."

Again the unwonted quality and quantity of sectarian pride rife with Episcopalians, is curiously and strikingly manifest in their contemptuous treatment of Reformed Episcopalians. With these, grace, truth, power, the law

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and love of Christ, the tokens of the Holy Spirit's presence, personal holiness indwelling, redemption zeal outreaching—all things of Bible Christianity which please God and bless men, appear in fully as clear and unquestionable exhibition as anywhere in the old Church.

Then, moreover, here are Episcopalians and the "Apostolic Succession"—all things one would say for the highest zeal in warmest Christian fellowship. But in fact denominational Pride in the old Church is rebuked in the existence and teaching of the new, and the Pride angrily responds, and the Churches are conspicuously alienated.

Of course Episcopalian sectarians are no exception in the characteristic results of denominational regulations and conditions at the gates of entrance—by which man's little things are made to triumph over God's great things. By their regulations and practices, the administration result is that without, stand rejected the most surely accredited children of God, in clo-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

best fellowship with God and enjoying the fullest testimony that they please God, while within, entirely at home and warmly welcomed and not always inconspicuous, are multitudes, without one element of Christian experience in evidence, and who in sentiments and life, are separated from the utterly worldly by the very faintest discrimination.

But what of the Methodists? Are they chargeable with a Denominational Pride of creed opinion, which hinders their swinging promptly into line of Organized Christianity on the basis of the prescribed liberties and exactions of the New Testament?

It is said of Wesley that in defining a Methodist as "not a man distinguished by his opinions, not a man distinguished by his usages, not a man distinguished by any ordinary mark of behavior," but as distinctively and emphatically a Christian, he wrote, "If some men say, Why, these are only common, fundamental principles of Christianity by which you would

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

distinguish a Methodist, thou hast said, so I mean : this is the very truth. I know they are, and I would to God both thou and all men should know, that I and all who follow my judgment, do vehemently refuse to be distinguished from other men by any other than the common principles of Christianity." Yes, and at the present day, this is very nearly descriptive of them. In fact the matter of Arminianism and Calvinism is practically left discretionary with its ministers and members now, albeit in any disappearance of Methodism in Organized Christianity a clear announcement that within evangelical limits doctrinal views were discretionary might not be superfluous. Then the Methodist is quite addicted to his denomination because it is "Methodist," not because of anything in which it is very radically differentiated from pure and simple Christianity, but because he is accustomed to his Christianity in the garb and with the superficial specialties of Methodism, to which he has become attached

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and of which very likely not a little proud. Still let a new wave of heaven-inspired enthusiasm for the "Name which is above every name"—for Christianity in its four Means for its four Ends, roll over into his neighborhood, the Methodist would be found an easy convert to and very much at home in an organized New Testament Church. He could be counted upon as a Christian, and not hopelessly mortgaged to his Denominational Pride of Opinion.

But what is to be said—what predicted—of the spiritual commonwealths which are thus hopelessly and wilfully mortgaged? Not only the voice of Bible prophet, but the voices—the admonishing voices of all human history are continually heard: "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth, but woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!" The question is, with the Church so criminally divided and delinquent, and the upturned faces of earth's weary and wretched millions so piteously, though blindly, appealing to a merciful

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Heaven and Christ's redemption love, and Christ and all Heaven so urgent for the glad coming of the Kingdom, the question for us is: Has God, in this beginning of the twentieth century, taken "the field" and is God now "marching on?"

Fifty years ago in the cause of human liberty and uplift, God was "marching on." The people of the Southern States, however, steadfastly refused to believe it, and in a universal self-complacency in existing institutions and loftiest pride of political and religious opinion, first ignored and then fought the heavenly crusade. But God marched on, and the tragic story of the penalties of that pride has never been, can never be told.

There is now for the Church indeed no prophetic forecast of "battle of the warrior, and confused noise, and garments rolled in blood," but there is prophetic forecast of unwelcomed but radical, disintegrating but finally, most • beneficent revolution in human institutions.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

until New Testament decrees for New Testament Christianity are fulfilled.

Any one who candidly reads the New Testament and noting its supreme urgencies, then examines the Church and surveys the world, and finally studies the "signs of the times," can scarcely fail to perceive that Christianity is soon to be organized and in due season triumphant, and that if men and institutions fail of its principles and grace within, while neglecting its transcendent mission without, ecclesiastical revolution will surely follow. And we may well ask: Is it now at the doors? Yes, there is every reason to believe that even now "God is marching on," and woe, *woe*, woe unto the organizations and the men, that in Pride of human opinion or attachments, obstruct the march!

## CHAPTER IV

BUT "what is the interpretation of the thing?" Is there nothing deeper than this simple Pride of creed opinion, which with us is making for divisions? Let us see. Let us now commission and then for light, follow up a young reporter-lawyer, a keen, intellectual, emancipated, honest, modern student of twentieth century piety, aiming at "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth"—and apt to discern it. At the outset, he commits to memory and installs in the throne-room of his intelligence, Mr. Gladstone's saying, "The longer I live, the more I feel that Christianity does not consist in any particular system of church government or in any credal statement, but that Christianity is Christ."

First in a general view he takes account of



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Anglo-Saxon piety in Great Britain and inspects the variegated and disputing Presbyterians of Scotland, and to a truly penetrating view, still more variegated and disputing Episcopalians of England, and at once shocked and disappointed, cries and records, "All irrational humbug!" But he is mistaken. A goodly degree of sincerity and intelligence obtains in both Churches.

He tries now the Episcopal Church in this country. He hears an officiating Bishop solemnly declare, "We bring you a grace that can be procured nowhere else," then in an interview proceeds to cross-examine the dignified witness. He finds that taking into view any land, any period, any parties, the Bishop is unable to point to a single factor of Christian life—holiness of character, heroic deeds, spiritual unity, Bible learning, Bible orthodoxy, redemption zeal, field successes—anything in, or up, or out—in an Episcopal individual or organization which the Reporter does not find fully matched

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

in a Presbyterian Church. Then he finds that his witness cannot charge upon another Church a single instance of ignorance or deadness or rancorous division or heterodoxy or rascality or corruption, that he cannot find a match for in the Episcopal Church, and that he can successfully defy the Bishop to point to any realities whatever that indicate Heaven's special favor of Providence or Grace. Forcing thus the Bishop indirectly to confess that a "Club" is just as much to God and for God, as the "Church," he loses patience and declares: "It is all irrational humbug." But he is mistaken. The Bishop is perfectly sincere and somewhat intelligent.

Now he investigates a Baptist, and taking for his starting proposition the Baptist minister in Tennessee who wanted to baptise his sick child, when she was too ill to be immersed, and so sprinkled her, and was duly expelled from the ministry for the same, he asks, who, after this presumably godly and faithful man was

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

cast out, remained. He found remaining and in good standing, none who had sprinkled anybody under any urgency of life or death, but any number who had no record whatever for grace or power in general, and as to other ordinances—the Lord's Supper, for example—no zeal as to the modes of it or for the Lord who instituted it, and looking now outside and now inside, he grows indignant and declares and records: "It is all irrational humbug!" But again he is mistaken. The Tennessee Baptists were conscientious and somewhat intelligent all the time.

Next he takes in hand the Presbyterians. He reads Dr. Charles Hodge: "The nearer we keep to the simple authoritative statements of God's Word, the firmer will be our faith, the more full and free our access to God, and the more harmonious and healthful our whole religious experience. Such is the informing influence of such experience, when it is genuine; that is when really guided by the Spirit

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and conformed to the revelation of God, that it effects a far nearer coincidence of views in all the children of God than the multiplicity of sects and conflicting systems of theology would lead us to imagine. The mass of true Christians, in all denominations, get their religion directly from the Bible, and are but little affected by the peculiarities of their creeds. And even among those who make theology a study, there is often one form of doctrine for speculation, and another, simpler and truer, for the closet. Metaphysical distinctions are forgot in prayer, or under the pressure of real conviction of sin, and need of pardon and of divine assistance. Hence it is that the devotional writings of Christians agree far nearer than their creeds. It may be taken for granted that that mode of stating divine truth which is most in accordance with the devotional language of true Christians, which best expresses those views which the soul takes when it appropriates

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

the doctrines of the gospel for its own spiritual emergencies, is the truest and the best."

Reading this and recalling Dr. Hodge's grief and pathetic tears, years ago in the General Assembly at Albany, because as he lamented there was "to be hereafter no more Old School Presbyterian Church"—when, in fact, not one member in a thousand and not one elder in twenty could have told, between Old and New, the difference, and which to-day, to ninety-nine ministers out of a hundred, would be a serious problem—while no man to-day in any sphere pretends that any loss or evil resulted from the union. Thus reading and recalling, our reporter-lawyer again records "What irrational humbug!" and is again mistaken. Dr. Charles Hodge was ever "clear as crystal" in sincerity and in spiritual and intellectual power, not only "honorable among the thirty" of Israel, but of the "three," and not only of the "three," but like Abishai, "chief among the three," in his

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

day, as might be said, the First American Christian!

Then our investigator calls in Princeton upon Drs. Patton and Warfield. He hears the former say: "It is quite true that the doctrines that Christians hold in common are more important than those which separate them. But the way to conserve that which is common to all is for each to be jealous of the doctrine that is peculiar to itself. Defend the outposts if you wish to defend the citadel." And knowing that the true "citadel" includes in its strategic and all comprehensive scope every appointed element of spiritual light and power anywhere on the field, and that "each jealous of the doctrine peculiar to itself" means thirty rival parties in self-indulgence jealous of each other—thirty Pauls, Apolloses, and Cephases on the proscribed circumference of the circle at the center of which, all sufficient "for all things," Christ reigns as "Head over all things to the Church," he records again, "What irrational humbug!"

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Next Dr. Warfield: Our Reporter listens as he identifies Christianity and Calvinism and says: "In proportion as we are religious, in that proportion are we Calvinistic, and when religion comes fully to its rights in our thinking, and feeling and doing, then shall we be truly Calvinistic. Calvinism is not merely the hope of true religion in the world, it is true religion in the world—as far as true religion is in the world at all"; and then corners him by asking him to name a single Christian man of any place or age, who, intelligent and spiritual and fired with passion for Christ, and truth, and love for God and man, yet failed in general or failed in comparison with any Calvinist who ever lived, in any respect of the Christian religion. Dr. Warfield, he somewhat heatedly affirms, mistakes the "fat" of Calvinism for the "vitality" of Christianity, and again records—"More irrational humbug!" and is again mistaken. Drs. Patton and Warfield are most sincere, scholarly, thoughtful and able men.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

But "what *is* the interpretation of the thing?" Reviewing his investigations, and much perplexed thereabout and a little suspecting himself and a good deal suspecting some occult element in the business, our reporter-lawyer takes to studying Biases and Prejudices. This leads him to read and quote Bacon. Bacon taught a lesson much forgotten and much needed in these later days—that to reason reliably upon facts or principles, a man must first of all cast out his interior "idols"—"idols of the tribe," that is dominating biases common to all men; "idols of the cave," that is dominating biases which belong to an individual; "idols of the forum," that is dominating biases which come from environment; "idols of the theatre," that is dominating biases established and maintained by tradition. And in a *Novum Organum* note Dr. Thomas Fowler says: "The proneness of the mind to rest in first principles [impressions?], however obtained and to resent any examination of them



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

is due mainly to a combination of pride with mental indolence. We recoil from the trouble of reviewing what lies at the bottom of so many of our beliefs, and we are too proud to acknowledge that we have been so long and so frequently in error. To a certain extent also it may be accounted for by the principle of association. We have ourselves repeated or heard the maxim repeated by others so frequently and in connection with so many other propositions that we accept as true, that we can hardly conceive it being called in question."

Much to the same intent is Pascal: "We must not mistake ourselves, we have as much that is automatic in us as intellectual, and hence it comes that the instrument by which persuasion is brought about, is not demonstration alone. How few things are demonstrated! Proofs can only convince the mind; custom makes our strongest proofs and those which we hold most firmly, it sways the automaton, which draws the unconscious intellect after it.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

. . . It is custom that convinces us, custom that makes so many men Christians, custom that makes them Turks, heathen, artisans, soldiers."

Says Tyndall: "The desire to establish or to avoid a certain result can so warp the mind as to destroy its power of estimating facts."

Says Beecher: "Our real commentators are our strongest traits of character; and we usually come out of the Bible with all those texts sticking to us which our idiosyncrasies attract."

Says an English physician of his town: "I had not been in it a month before I discovered that while education affects the heads of the people, and penetrates those only a little way, the old traditions are of their hearts, only to be driven out by generations of patient teaching."

Says Mark Twain in "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court": "Inherited ideas are a curious thing and interesting to observe and examine. I had mine, the king and his people had theirs. In both cases they flowed in ruts worn deep by time and habit, and the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

man who should have proposed to divert them by reason or argument would have had a long contract on his hands."

So Drs. George B. Cheever and Charles S. Robinson. Says the former: "The effect of prejudice and doubt upon our first ideas of truth, that are deposited in the mind to germinate into life by a childlike faith, may be illustrated from physiology by the experiment of varnish on an egg. Eggs varnished cannot be hatched, because they have been hermetically sealed and isolated from what might be called the air and life pulsations. The mother hen might sit upon them with all requisite constancy, but the embryo will not germinate into life with the varnish on the shell. The air cannot pass through the envelope, and there is, consequently, no life, but after a little while, death. Such is the stifling effect of prejudice and doubt upon the germs of truth, even in minds the most active." And the latter, after quoting "the shrewd and weighty aphorism" of Goethe, "As are one's

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

inclinations so are his opinions," says: "Any vigorous man's views of difficult points of doctrine are largely swayed and eventually fixed by his own personality. Human decision depends less upon logic, and more upon life. Most men choose their intellectual position, and take their practical stand, under the powerful—although often unconscious—pressure of temperament, education, and taste; as each 'thinketh in his heart, so is he.' "

And now the "lawyer" in the reporter takes account of this significant newspaper comment: "It is only just to mention that the decision was not unanimous, and that Chief Justice Fuller, of Illinois, Mr. Justice White, of Louisiana, and Mr. Justice Peckham, of New York, voted against the constitutionality of the Sherman Anti-trust law; but it is not often that a decision, even in the Supreme Court, can be rendered entirely free from political bias. We do not mean that such distinguished Democrats as those we have mentioned would consciously al-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

low party considerations to influence them in forming their opinions—far from it; our Supreme Court is composed of men above even the suspicion that such would be the case. But there remains an unconscious influence that will affect even the most intelligent and upright men, and no man can get away from it"; and recalls that in the Hayes-Tilden presidential controversy of 1877, of the Electoral Commission without exception, Democratic Supreme Court Justices voted on the Democratic side, and the Republicans on the Republican side. Furthermore, he remembers that before 1860 and "the war," all the thinkers and reasoners and conscientious men and women, equally with the mercenary and selfish and ignorant, were pro-slavery advocates—authors, teachers, judges, statesmen, ministers, bishops—all!

The investigator concludes his steadily enlarging and at last, immense appreciation of biases and prepossessions by observing and chronicling two convincing illustrations far

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

apart in terrestrial location, and as far apart in social and moral location. He reads: "Until very recently there existed in India the remains of a religious sect called Thugs. Less than a century ago they numbered thousands of members. They were worshipers of the goddess Kali, and it was their belief that they should murder inoffensive people in honor of Kali. They had their rules and rites of murder, handed down from father to son. They worked in bands, and under all possible disguises ingratiated themselves into the confidence of travelers, and then strangled and buried them. Their victims numbered not less than thirty thousand a year. The British officers, who suppressed them, declared that many of them were gentlemen of conscientious life, cultivated and eminently respectable, who fully believed they were doing their duty, as they had been taught their religion from infancy. Some of them had the record of hundreds of murders. But they

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

were not insane; they were simply victims of an erroneous belief as to duty."

Then this from the *Church Times*: "It is useless to try to convince the English layman that the sacramental bread is or contains the body of Christ, by bluntly telling him so; but if we can induce him for a year or more to adore the bread, paying lowly reverence thereto, he will then find little difficulty in accepting the Catholic doctrine"; which means that what you cannot introduce into the convictions of a man through his intelligence and reason, you can introduce through his acquired impressions and Biases!

Finally he recalls the often quoted saying of the Roman prelate, that if he can have exclusive control of the religious education of children until they are eight years old, he will take his chances on the coming years, and "rests."

Taking leave now of our Reporter there remain several things to record: 1. The "irrational humbug"—(and no mistake about it this

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

time)—of the derelict and *laissez faire* sentiment that earnest mutual debate between the denominations and uncomplimentary criticism from without, is not "in good form." 2. That denominational enthusiasm is largely a matter of self-gratification, of personal and corporate self-indulgence in coddling and celebrating Biases. 3. That for a True Church in the regulation unity and spirituality and efficiency, the *plan* must be that of Ends and Means as hereinbefore rudely sketched, and the *power*, the direct omnipotence of God Himself. Man can enlighten ignorance, convince the understanding, give polarization to the reason and the judgment, and constrain the will—God alone, in a human heart, can dethrone or convert or banish a Bias! For the casting out of the "Evil spirit" of a Bias, there is for the denominational sufferer but one available, one valid proposition—the same that in gospel days followed failure with omnipotence at the mountain base, "Bring him unto me!"



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

At this point Dr. Charles Parkhurst can be fittingly and profitably heard: "It is urged that denominations have their grounds in the inevitable differences that exist among men, it is sufficient to reply that those differences are no greater now than they were in the apostolic times when denominations had not yet begun to be thought of. There were the same essential incongruities and disparities as now; the same differences in schooling and in the way of interpreting Christ and truth; but none of these differences were felt to cut into the substance of the matter, and therefore introduced no jarring note into the Christian concord of the first followers of our Lord. There was no proposition to have one church for the gifted disciples and another for the unschooled; one for the rich and another for the impecunious; one for the Peters who could put their loyalty to Jesus in one form of confession, and another for the Thomases who found it a little difficult to phrase their loyalty to Jesus in quite the Petrine

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

form of declaration. It was with them all purely a matter of personal following, founded exclusively in the common commitment of themselves to their risen and ascended Lord. Consequently there could be but one church.

No doubt the church did not long continue in that primitive condition. The instant a Christian ceases to be completely bound up in his divine Lord his regards begin to settle back into the channel of his own individual proclivities; and that is the genius of denomination. Denomination is not made up of the essence, but of the accidents of Christianity. A denomination is another name for some single strand of personal eccentricity selected from each of a number of counterparts and tied up into one bundle. Methodism, Presbyterianism, Episcopacy, are each of them a dignified way of designating a temperamental idiosyncrasy; and when enough of either of these three stripes of idiosyncracies are brought together, the result is a Methodist Church, or a Presbyterian

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Church, or an Episcopal Church, as the case may be. That is the genius of the entire performance."

## CHAPTER V

DENOMINATIONS now directly and at closer quarters :

Years ago, illustrating the meanness of spiritual dilatoriness, Mr. Beecher pictured the United States relief steamer anchoring in the harbor of the starving Irish and in thrilling passion of eloquence, voiced their fierce appeal of desperate hunger and distress: "Unload! unload! unload!"—this in what they did want. To-day great millions of both saints and sinners hungering for the bread of life, before the Christian Church, are heard in the same clamorous imploring cry: "Unload! unload! unload!"—but now in the things that they do not want. Discharge your pernicious cargo of "idols" and prejudices, your arms and ar-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

mor of denominational divisions!—is their thought.

Let us now at the outset, and in a preliminary way, for a moment, notice of our present denominational segregation, two intolerable, although subordinate and apparently superficial factors of administration. The one is heresy trials, the other, ministerial support.

Whether a minister shall be within the enclosure of any particular denomination, or in one rather than another, is usually at the root of things, a matter of very little account, even to himself. In any event, life, liberty, pursuit of happiness or knowledge or usefulness or holiness are fully open to him. But in the very simple matter of deciding a man's ecclesiastical location, denominational prosecutors, from the most preposterous codes of procedure, can as with an earthquake shake and disturb and distress the entire Church, and open the way for the worldly and "yellow" Press gleefully to make the courts of incensed holiness "smell to

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

heaven" in offence rank of disputation and acrimony. And what is more, one man, one accuser out of his own idiosyncracies, or something worse, if shrewd and determined, can do it all.

Church leaders in this country need enlightenment and instruction from the Produce Exchange.

If here one member supposes another to be an offender, what does he do? He quietly addresses the Committee of Complaints. If these decide that there is "none occasion nor fault," the matter vanishes at once. If otherwise, the case is referred to the Committee of Arbitration; a full hearing is accorded to all parties, and a decision rendered which settles the matter forever, and not a ripple of agitation reaches the outside world, or feeds the curiosity of the public or affects for an hour, the harmony and efficiency of the Exchange itself. Heaven and earth are calling upon Organized Christianity to rid denominationalism of "heresy trials"

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and to give a Church to be as judicially dignified as a Produce Exchange.

The other factor, abundantly sufficient in itself to warrant the most revolutionary abolition of denominations, appears in the matter of ministers' salaries, which on the average are less than seven hundred dollars a year.

Does the American Public, do the American Editors, do the men of thought and conscience in the Churches themselves, realize what that means—what untold wrongs and injustice and excuseless meanness are reported in that simple statement?

Do the students of political economy, the writers of American history realize what it is to have scattered through the communities, North, South, East and West, in a prosperous and enlightened country like ours, 150,000 men—cultivated, refined men, many with families like-minded—men who have spent seven years of special sacrifice and studious diligence for their calling, to which they have come and in

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

which they are held simply by the noble desire to please God and bless men, and half of them living on less than seven hundred dollars a year?

Suppose that some deep-reaching and far-reaching organization of this world—the Standard Oil Company or Pennsylvania Railroad Company for example—got into its relentless grasp tens of thousands of educated and cultivated men and then, by some sacred motive within to which they appealed, and by some compelling force without, which they applied, held them there year after year, and decade after decade of their prosperity—and paying them on the average but seven hundred dollars a year—the dictionaries would be beggared of scornful words with which to denounce them in their disgraceful and hateful meanness!

And if anybody supposes that either the generous manhood of intelligent and energetic Americans, or the just and compassionate God,



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

“keeping watch above His own,” is going to tolerate this gratuitous abomination on the part of denominational leaders—simply that they may be gratified in denominational attachments—on during the twentieth century, they are assuredly mistaken. They know not God or the signs of the times.

But now of the denominations let us definitely remark that they are :

1. Baseless and unscientific in constitution and segregation.
2. According to their *raison d'etre*, endless in number.
3. While not Scriptural or philosophical in theory, not feasible in operation at home or abroad.
4. Objectionable, negatively, positively.
5. By all the tokens of earth and heaven, doomed.

Alike in press and pulpit, denominational apologists are forever telling us, with endless ingenuities of eloquence, that sectarian divi-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sions are inevitable because of the many-sided aspects of revealed truth and radical differences in mental constitutions. They tell us, "you cannot have organic unity because men cannot change their intelligent and conscientious convictions." "Grounds for these denominational divergences are found in the very nature of man as he is constituted," they say.

Addressing the Federation Convention, Hon. David J. Brewer, Justice of the United States Supreme Court, said: "Denominations exist, will exist and ought to exist. Their existence is in no manner inconsistent with the spirit of unity which should animate all. They only illustrate the great plan of the universe—unity in variety. Not one flower alone, but a countless number, with differences of form, color and leaf, mantle the earth during the summer days, yet a single thought of beauty pervades the whole floral world. No one mountain peak is like another in elevation, form, display of rock and forest, but all appeal to our sense of

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

grandeur. There is a marked apparent difference between the falling of the leaf, the dropping of the aeronaut from his balloon and the stupendous majesty of Niagara's falling waters, yet all obey one law—the law of gravitation. Man, though made in the image of God, is of all creations the most varied and complex. No two faces are exactly alike. No two minds are identical in their processes and conceptions. The chords of feeling and passion in no two hearts are tuned to precisely the same key. Yet, notwithstanding the infinite variety, there is a manifest unity in face and mind and heart. So while differences of creed, in ideas of worship and governmental polity, separate the Christian world into many denominations, all are united by a common devotion to a single Master. These various denominations, responding to the different wants of the human soul, make known in the language of the apostle 'the manifold wisdom of God.' "

This is fine literature but very poor psychol-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ogy—if the Justice will permit us to say so. Of course in the *exhibitions* of nature and human nature, there is an evident and interesting variety. But for the human subject, in the hour and crisis of supreme action, his specialties, unless they pertain directly and contributively to the urgent business in hand, ought to be and can be resolutely suppressed. If God calls for organized Christianity it is the Christian's duty and privilege to curb and deny himself in those elements of his being which militate against it, even though they argue for a denomination.

Our neighbors, the Life Saving men, may serve us for illustration in this respect. When there is "nothing doing," and "off duty," they are free to indulge their personal eccentricities, you see them here on the bayside, shooting or fishing, one in a skiff, one in a "sneak-box," one in a dory, one in a yawl, one in a canoe, one in a punt, one in a bateau. But let the cry, "a wreck in the offing" be resounded, do

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

you see them now in "diversity" instead of "unity," in "variety" instead of "harmony," each "conscientiously adhering to what he personally believes," in the "necessary divergences of human nature," painfully dragging across the beach, each the craft of his own personal idiosyncrasy and seven men in seven precarious "tubs," paddling to the rescue? Of course not. Now according to the law of the emergency, as determined alike by principles and experience, stringently interpreted and unanimously regarded, in unity they meet the practical ends of the situation for themselves and others and in "organic unity" in one true life craft, with "one mind" dare and do. On the bay they might be denominationals, on the ocean they must be Christians. Twentieth century believers are on the ocean!

Look in upon this excited, surging, debating, bantering crowd of the New York Stock Exchange. You have here, not only picturesque but measureless varieties of the genus homo.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

But when "on 'change" every possible, dearest element of personal idiosyncrasy is ruthlessly turned out of doors, if it at all interferes with negotiating securities. "This one thing I do" every man is crying, and suppressing every personal eccentricity which interferes with, or indeed does not contribute to his doing.

In the general Church the diversified elements of human nature neither justify nor account for denominations, and if denominations did represent differing elements in human nature, they would not on that account be justified.

But we now advance to remark that our denominations do not represent essential elements in human nature. What "differing wants of the human soul" are in fact met in our "various denominations"? Are there with us one hundred and forty-three "differing wants of the human soul"? "Differences of creed, ideas of worship and governmental policy" do "separate the Christian world into many denominations,"

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

no doubt, but how many of these differences of creed and ideas belong at all to fundamental and essential elements of human character? Are there one hundred and forty-three varieties of these essential elements? Suppose Justice Brewer had sounded even the thirty representatives of sectarian organization before him in the Federation Convention, would he have struck thirty "differing essential elements of human character," to match the denominations? What psychologist would accord thirty differing essential elements of personal character to that Convention? Moreover, what Bible scholar would concede that there were thirty Scriptural, vital, cardinal dogmas represented there? Any searcher sounding deeply and keenly would have disclosed thirty different biases, no doubt, but not thirty sets of endowed, intellectual, conscientious, emancipated, spiritual, affiliated *reasoners*.

Another illustration in this regard would seem to be furnished by Dr. Benjamin B. War-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

field. He writes: "Interfused and interpenetrated and governed by the one God, united by one baptism, symbolizing one faith to the one Lord, called in one calling, by the one Spirit, into one body: here we have the Apostle's conception of the Church's unity and its ground, a unity consistent with any diversity of gifts—with diversity in everything, in fact, except true Christianity.

If this study of the nature and relations of the conception of Christian unity as it lies in the New Testament has any validity, we cannot but be aided by it in our search for unity now. It is clear, for instance, that: We are not to seek it in the inclusion of all Christians in one organization and under one government. A story is told of a man who, wishing a swarm of bees, caught every bee that visited his flowers and enclosed them together in a box, only to find the difference between an aggregation and a hive. We cannot produce unity by building a great house over a divided family. Different



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

denominations have a similar right to exist with separate congregations, and may be justified on like grounds."

Of course "diversity in everything in fact, except *true Christianity*," yes, and organization accordingly. Why not "the inclusion of all Christians in one organization and under one government"? Where in its "validity" does the New Testament forbid or discourage this? Evidently Dr. Warfield would have us believe that there is an element in human nature such, that when men are brought together in organization as Christians, they become "bees" and mutually sting or are necessarily idle and worthless—an "aggregation," while if they come together in one of the multitudinous sectarian organizations, they are harmonious, loving, coöperative and efficient—a "hive!"

Years ago in Princeton Seminary there were young men of different denominations—not only Presbyterians, but Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Episcopalians. In the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

closest daily fellowship, they studied the truth, developed in spiritual character, and put on the armor of a future ministry, with no saving element of denominationalism in the situation at all. Were they antagonistic "bees," and only an "aggregation" of stinging enmity?

The young men went to Northfield and together prosecuted—excepting ceremonial rites—everything religious, before Christ and with Christ and in the power and demonstration of the Spirit; and with no element of denominationalism to sanctify and correct things either. Were they in fact an "aggregation" of irreconcilable "bees"? They attended Y. M. C. A. Conventions occasionally and Y. M. C. A. services constantly; with no denominationalism to redeem, counteract, conserve. Were they "bees," "busy" with acrimony and animosities?

Now at length invited to Organized Christianity for the Ends and Means of Christianity, under the one banner of Christ, to whom, with whom, while they seek His grace, they live—

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

does Dr. Warfield imagine that thus brought together, even though bereft of denomination-ism, they will become an "aggregation" of buzzing, warring "bees"?

When the Corinthian Christians were summoned to quit their sectarian divisions of "Paul" and "Apollos" and "Cephas" and unite, organize, coöperate under Christ the "Head," were they invited to an "aggregation" and a "bee" battle?

Justice Brewer says "Denominations exist, will exist and ought to exist." They do exist—quite too true—but whether they now ought to exist, or in the approaching days of the Coming of the Kingdom, they will exist, depends upon whether they are philosophical and Scriptural! Are they?

One thing is evident, the different Churches do habitually forego and surrender the "intelligent and conscientious convictions," in creed, worship and government, which they so religiously vaunt before others, and without,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

when constrained by some considerations of advantage, within.

The Bishops of the Episcopal Church, in presenting the "Quadrilateral" basis of Church Unity, offered to give up everything distinctive, but their "figment" of "apostolic succession." The Princeton Seminary professors used to advise their graduates to freely settle in Congregational Churches—thus giving up the whole matter of Church Government, in order that into New England might be introduced the Augustinian theology.

In a sense, the Presbyterian Church foregoes all its denominational specialties and conducts within itself "Organized Christianity," in its splendid Women's work. Having as Christians, at their first uniting with the Church, accepted the Bible and its Theism and Heroism, its Christian women, without any doctrinal or ecclesiastical pledge whatever, at home and abroad, live and teach and preach the gospel with magnificent fidelity and success—like Paul

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

—"preaching the Kingdom of God and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding."

But if there is neither Scripture nor intelligence in the denominational pretence, what is the determining principle which obtains for and in the various segregations? There is none. Narrowing now our investigations to the thirty, we shall see that the denominational motto is: "Anything, anywhere, anyhow!"—any mere notion at the determining station, no matter what the results!

To quote from the *Westminster*: "Orthodoxy as man sees it, is largely in matter of locality. We know three churches that stand side by side in the same little hamlet. In one it is orthodox not to vote, in the other not to sing hymns, and in the other to fall from grace. They are all made up of good people, and dwell in perfect unity except on Sundays."

Twenty years ago, before the most urgent needs in, and splendid opportunities for, all

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sunny but yet beclouded Italy, the Waldensian and Free Churches furnished this suggestive record: "The question of union between the two Churches is not a settled one. The point of disagreement is the name; the one would have it 'The Evangelical Church of Italy,' the other, 'The Evangelical Waldensian Church.' " "I fear from my knowledge of the parties that practically the matter for the present is ended," regretfully writes the Rev. John R. McDougall.

We read: "A good many negroes of Boston are affiliating with a new sect which has sprung up there recently. The society teaches baptism by immersion, the drinking of water instead of wine at Communion, the taking of unleavened bread for sacrament, the washing of feet, the saluting of members with a kiss, breathing on the head to impart the Holy Ghost, and the keeping of Saturday as the Sabbath, instead of Sunday. The sect styles itself 'the Church of the Living God' and 'the Saints of Christ.' The minister who is propagating the new faith an-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

nounces: 'I call all men liars who do not believe as we do'—not a bad photograph of denominationalism.

But for very weak human nature—very powerful for division, on the premises of Christ—let us look now in an entirely different quarter, and here are the Southern Churches, kept in separation decade after decade, simply by a venerable but childish grudge, forty years old. Oh, yes—for the Presbyterians—we know about the Spring resolutions, and the Hodge protest, and the secession, and the, for a while, annual Northern resolutions, and the rejected advances, and the Johnson "rider" and the ineffectual Hamlin resolutions. We also know that for thirty years there has been in the North no feeling or expression reflecting at all upon the Christian Character and doctrinal soundness of the South. And we also know that if the two parties were together for an hour as Christians, and one gleam of the eternal realities flashed upon the common conscience, and

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

one glance at sin and salvation taken from heaven's point of view, and one flashlight vision of a Christian's emergencies of situation and commission, accorded, and one "clear call" from the other world, one reiteration from the skies of the imperative, "Forgive one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you," there would be on the spot "one fold" under "one Shepherd" in ten minutes. But in fact for the Church, the banner inscription of division, still floats on the Southern breezes, "Anything, anywhere, anyhow."

Not so for the world, however. Thus writes Dr. Henry M. Wharton: "It is not pleasant to be reminded of any disagreeable circumstances, and yet one can hardly pass unnoticed the fact, that between the great sections, North and South, which were engaged in bloody war a few years ago, the only unreconciled people are the Christians. How painful it is to read of the Northern and Southern Baptists! the Northern and Southern Methodists! the North-



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ern and Southern Presbyterians! Even the old soldiers who fought each other to the very death, are warm and cordial friends, having forever buried all enmity of the past. I am an ex-Confederate soldier myself, and yet in the last few years have made no less than three speeches for the Grand Army men on their Memorial occasions, and could not have been more hospitably entertained by my own comrades of the South."

Dr. Talmage after enumerating forty-three Protestant denominations, and adding, "and many other denominations more in number than I have mentioned," says: "These are more or less absurdly cut up into a great ecclesiastical hash, with enough salt of real grace to keep it, and enough pepper of biting controversy to spice it, but nevertheless hash. With some it is a question of robes; with some a question of days; with some a question about non-essentials so small that the theologian has to get out his dictionary to find them."

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Yes, non-essentials "small" indeed—yet large enough to inaugurate and perpetuate to an incredible degree "graceless organization."

To quote again the *Westminster*: "A doctrine, the belief or rejection of which makes one neither better nor worse, cannot be of especial importance in the sight of God. And yet Churches divide on just such lines as these. In a world where millions have never heard of Christ, vast fortunes are expended every year for no purpose than to perpetuate graceless organization." This on the sacred premises where the voice of New Testament truth is forever resounding, "Nothing, ever, anywhere, anyhow, that interferes with or does not contribute to, the headship of Christ and the Holy Spirit's operations in human hearts!"

Again, if the existing denominations are scientifically founded and necessary, then there are grounds and necessity for ten times more. An interminable catalogue of them is called for—by the basis—the rationale of what we have.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

The sectarian apologist says, "Our denominations are natural, necessary, inevitable." All the while, however, he is unconsciously talking about his own, and to excuse his own self-gratification, is constrained to concede the same to others. How many others?

According to Dr. Wrangemann, there are in Frankfort four, and in Hesse-Darmstadt five congregations of "*Separate*" Lutherans, holding no communion with each other, besides Lutherans not "*Separate*." Why not forty or fifty as well as four or five?

Says a Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Robert Johnston: "We are anxious above all things to avoid in the new provinces that overlapping of church life which is so common in the other districts. For example, there is in the Province of Quebec, a town of five thousand inhabitants, of whom four thousand five hundred are Roman Catholics, ministered to by one church. The remaining five hundred are

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

served by five different denominations." Why only five?

If Baptists, whose specialty is baptism, are necessary, so are Communists with a specialty in the Lord's Supper, as much—and so on through all the ordinances and rites. There is no root reason in the world why there should not be Calvinistic Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists, in ecclesiastical separation from Arminians of the same sects. If a Presbyterian will not affiliate with a Christian who votes, because the Bible deprecates "the Kingdoms of this world," there is no reason why he should not separate himself from a Christian who has education or wealth, because the Bible deprecates the wisdom and riches of this world. There is just as much Scriptural ground for public prayers from Psalms only as there is for public praises from Psalms only.

If in worship a man would separate himself in favor of prescribed prayers, there are equally valid reasons why he should separate himself

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

in favor of prescribed sermons. In one case the minister addresses God in behalf of men; in the other he addresses men in behalf of God. The Old School Presbyterian Church once separated from the New. A division of the Old School Church itself on the Premillenarian issue, would have been far more dignified and philosophical.

Dr. Guthrie tells of a man and his wife, the only survivors of various splits in a Baptist chapel. "I might," he says, "have raised a controversy between man and wife and split them." No doubt, and he would have been correctly denominational if he had. The logic and criteria of present denominations call for scores of others in addition.

But if the present denominational diagram is not theoretically scientific in either its formulations or its enumerations, no more is it practically feasible.

Visit a town of five thousand population. Its "Daughter of Zion" will be reeling under a

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

load of six denominational Churches. But if now denominationalism be essential and inevitable, she has got to stagger along somehow under the burden of at least twenty-four more. "Well, let the full exploitation of denominational Christianity be reserved for the very large towns that can accommodate it." But is that either fair or Scriptural? Is the Christian plan of "many denominations all united by a common devotion to a single Master, responding to the different wants of the human soul, and making known the manifold wisdom of God" to be prosecuted only in the very largest towns—especially when after all, none of them will be large enough and even "the world itself could not contain" the endless category?

Suppose that during the session of the Federation Convention delegates from a large town in a hitherto forgotten region, hearing that Christianity was necessarily and appropriately represented in denominationalism, had applied

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

to the Convention as such, for ministers to come and organize and administer New Testament Christianity. Either the Convention has got to send thirty men or none, acknowledging that denominationalism cannot represent—cannot prosecute Christianity, which is indeed the deplorable fact.

Six men in the name of denominationalism go out for Christianity to Japan. "What is your basis of organization and are you all here?" the astute and investigating little men will ask. "We represent ideal Christianity; we are six out of thirty; with us 'many denominations all united by a common devotion to a single Master, respond to the different wants of the human soul and thus make known the manifold wisdom of God,' and twenty-four more are due to arrive and apply at any time, only we crowded on a little in advance of the others." So they replied, and when they could not guarantee that if they were admitted and accommodated, twenty-four more would not

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

immediately appear, the "heathen in his blindness" declined them all, and said: "You made in this business a great mistake in strategy. You first sent over your New Testament, and we already know the Ends and Means of Christianity and the story of 'Paul and Apollos and Cephas,' and we send you all home to ponder the New Testament question of the apostle, 'Is Christ divided?'"

Some one says, "Japan demurs at thirteen kinds of Presbyterians, and sixteen kinds of Methodists and many Baptist religions, and says: 'First decide among yourselves which one is right—then come to Japan.'" Even so.

A most suggestive and ominous and indeed critical situation is disclosed by the Student Volunteer Conventions. In general the twenty-five hundred young men, representing thirty denominations, have belonged to Young Men's Christian Associations and together as Christians, at exceedingly close quarters, have sought and found every treasure of New Testament



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

piety. Soon they face the "field which is the world" to go forth as missionaries. If now denominationalism belongs essentially to Christianity, they must go in thirty rival divisions, from thirty home societies, to establish and maintain thirty separate missions. What an astounding spectacle is here presented—twenty-five hundred educated men full of fiery and intelligent and heaven-inspired enthusiasm for the heaven-appointed Ends of Christianity! Not only from their Bibles but from a manifold experience in Young Men's Societies, they have learned the Means and how to employ them. Now at the momentous crisis of their glad career, Church leaders, out of an Egyptian bondage to what they are used to, taken captive for and by their religious self-indulgence, come forth to dictate—"You must go forth as denominationalists!"

Those who have eyes to see can see, that soon—thus commissioned, while the young

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

men will not go, and the nations will not receive them—God will not send them!

Furthermore, denominations are objectionable. They lack Scriptural and rational foundation, are logically numberless, and actually ridiculously numerous. The propositions upon which they rest and the plans which they propose are not feasible, and they are besides distinctly objectionable—and this on the domain of always protesting, and always sufficient Christianity.

In the first place, sectarianism fails in ethics—in Christian altruism. As already indicated in such a convocation as the Federation Convention of 1905, it reaches the summit of its possibilities. Here at the best it can do, the noblest it can show, are the representatives of thirty denominations all equally expressing “a common devotion to a single Master” and “the manifold wisdom of God.” In the convention do the six representatives of six leading denominations for instance, plan then and there,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and afterward and elsewhere, to move up and make room for the remaining twenty-four? Out in the towns, do the six already on the ground ever come together to see if somehow room cannot be found for and accorded to a seventh or eighth or ninth—not to speak of the twenty-one others?

To quote the Rev. John Woodruff Conklin: "You and I know of a town of sixteen hundred people. If any one of us ministers, presumably fairly sound in mind and body, were called to the pastorate of a church there with the privilege of dictating the number of ministers and churches to share with ours the religious work of that community, salary corresponding to size of parish, what dictum would be forthcoming? No one of us would ask more than one other pastor and church, and nearly every one would prefer the field alone.

There is another well-known town of twenty-eight hundred people. No one of us called to minister in it, endowed with autocratic power,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

would tolerate more than one other pastor and church. Yet we count eight churches there.

Another town of five thousand people contains thirteen churches, twelve of which had pastors a year ago. No one of us, if called to labor there, would ask more than three pastoral collaborators.

Remember that you and I would rather have more than less than a thousand people of all ages in our several parishes, if allowed free scope."

Denominationally, ministers and others are possibly friendly and tolerate each other, but who ever heard of one—on a Christian Golden Rule basis—giving up his field or his salary or his members to another denomination when it was weak, while he was strong, because it equally with him belonged to the grand denominational system which "exists and will exist and ought to exist," a legitimate sharer in the "divine unity in variety"? Nothing ever, any-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

where does a denominationalist as such, accord to another, unless he cannot help it.

Again denominationalism is objectionable in its relation to *practical results*. Herein the "very elect" are deceived and thinkers led fatally astray, as intimated in a former discussion—by "appearance" which is not of "heart."

So a speaker at a Mission Convention: "The essential unity of the Christian Church is seen in the midst of manifold outward variety. From the domains of nature and of society may be drawn many illustrations of this point. To a child all the stars may look alike, but astronomers know well that one star differs from another star in glory. Look at the human face divine. In that, as in every department, God is always original; He never makes a copy. If the Church is God's workmanship we must look for the same characteristics in it that we find elsewhere. The gardener with his shears can trim dead trees to make them all look exactly alike. Let the trees be alive and he will

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

seek in vain to preserve their uniformity. The day after to-morrow the likeness will be gone." Referring to his ten children, the speaker said he "rejoiced in the diversity of form and character among them; the one supplied what the other lacked—so with the Church of Christ."

All this is perfectly true, but it is picture-gallery talk, and not of heart and life. If the children of God and Christ's Church are here simply on exhibition—let there be a thousand-fold "variety" in their "unity." But in fact they are, on the field of experience and action, supremely straitened for accomplishment.

As long as the ten children are viewed in the light of an attractive display, let their individual peculiarities be encouraged and admired. But suppose the specialty of each takes the form of a perverse and wilful judgment, and ignoring the facts and laws of family and hygienic authority, each eats and drinks in personal self-indulgence, until there stand before you ten pale, emaciated, haggard, pitiable invalids.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

What now of the “beautiful variety in essential unity”?

Imagine again the ten on a river bank; a neighbor’s child has fallen in and is even now struggling in the waters. If he is saved, the ten must save him—and they can without a peradventure save him if in unity and coöperation they conform to the facts and laws of rescue. But he drowns, and drowns because of the ten, each asserts himself, and jostles and confuses and counteracts the others. What of the charming “variety in unity” now?

Editors and orators are forever saying: “Differing denominations, which exist and will exist and ought to exist, are like a mighty army with its varying divisions of regiments or brigades, or like the dissimilar states in and for one nation.” Imaginary *exhibitions* again—what for experience and action? This: A panorama of war with the national capital invested and state troops summoned to the rescue. Here they are approaching the scene of con-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

flict, marshalled denominationally. Thirty divisions are here possibly in a "Federation," which, to be sure, keeps them from fighting each other; but pitiaibly deficient in military discipline and development, with no primary relation to the commander-in-chief, in either subordinate or patriotic passion, no zealous enthusiasm for the cause, no principles of effective unity, no economical or scientific coöperation, no fraternity of feeling or plan, and not a little rivalry and jealousy in every direction. As the result, the city falls and the enemy reigns, or if not this, the enemy perennially threatens and the city trembles and the cause of patriotism languishes as the nation fails of its own for prosperity or appropriate conquest.

"He pitied the ruffled plumage and forgot the dying bird," said the critics of Edmund Burke, and denominationals, fascinated by appearances and arguing from exhibitions, complacently rejoice in the unruffled "plumage"



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

of denominationalism and forget the "dying bird" of Christianity. How long?

Singing poetic lullabies about beautiful stars and garden beds and states and a "mighty army," and "the great plan of the universe, unity in variety," denominationalists forget the conditions of character and action—of *life*, and their own delinquencies in respect of it.

Then sectarianism is objectionable in that it so ignobly fails, and fails while at home and abroad, thwarting and obstructing Christianity. It fails in numerical organization. Not to multiply such instances as that of the "Oklahoma preacher who details his struggles in a town of six hundred people and six churches"—we have 150,000 Protestant ministers for 68,000,000 Protestant population, "babies and all"—and one minister for every 450 of population. Now let 1,350 of population, an exceedingly small charge, be assigned to each minister, and you have 100,000 ministers free for appointments

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

to Foreign Missions, and millions of money saved, by which to support them.

To quote again Rev. John W. Conklin: "Just with our unneeded crumbs we could supply the missions beyond their fondest dreams. The money saved in the closing of the parasitic churches here would go far toward supporting the transferred ministers. Looked at from this point of view, the matter assumes colossal importance. The vision of waste on one side and emptiness on the other is stunning. One cannot picture or characterize it fairly without laying himself open to the charge of fanaticism or lunacy."

Moreover, sectarianism fails to save. With always and everywhere an exceedingly small percentage of increase, in recent years some of our largest denominations have actually decreased. Says Dr. Rossiter: "Men give heed to every other consideration under the sun, before they will give heed to obligations that will be best for them and their family religiously.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

The Gospel has lost grip upon the conscience and the loyalty of men, and what is the reason?

Some say that the division of Christianity into sects, denominations, little protesting cliques, is having its inevitable consequences: (1) Confusion of mind on the part of the hearers as to which one is true. (2) Rejection of them all, because each of them seems faulty. Where an audience hears one hundred and fifty men proclaiming a Gospel, each one having something peculiar to itself which it affirms is the *simon-pure* and only real Gospel, with some words of criticism for all the other one hundred and forty-nine gospels, there must result confusion of mind, and then apathy. And that is the condition we are in in this country. We have one hundred and fifty denominations of Christians, and each claims its own peculiar gospel as the truthfulest truth, and that the others are wanting in some es-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sential particular. And there is widespread confusion of mind and a general apathy."

It likewise fails to give. Here in brief is a statement of "how Americans spend their money": Chewing-gum, \$11,000,000; millinery, \$80,000,000; confectionery, \$178,000,000; jewelry and plate, \$700,000,000; tobacco, \$750,000,000; liquor, \$1,243,000,000; church work at home, \$250,000,000; foreign missions, \$7,500,000! It would be highly edifying, under this schedule, to push the inquiry: How proportionately as to these various objects, do American *Christians* spend their money?

To quote J. Campbell White: "If the Christian Church in America could be brought to give one postage stamp per capita a week to foreign missions, it would give \$10,000,000 in a year. If it would give one carfare a week, \$50,000,000. If it would give one dish of ice-cream a week, \$100,000,000. If the equivalent of one hour's work—not at the prices which you get for your labor, but at the rate of the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

most unskilled labor in the country—\$150,000,000."

Furthermore, denominationalism is flagrantly obstructive. An editorial of the February 9, 1899 *Independent* eloquently urged Christian Unity for "our new possessions," as follows: "Shall it be the Church of Christ, or shall it be a medley of rival, perhaps even a wrangle of conflicting sects? That is the question now before the Churches; what shall be their answer? We do not ask what the various missionary societies or secretaries want, but, rather, what the Churches want.

What shall the Christian Church do in Porto Rico? Of course, it must occupy the field. Father Sherman says, and quite truly, that Porto Rico is a Catholic island without religion. This being so nearly true, the field is open for religious work by Americans, both Catholic and Protestant. The two cannot work together, but cannot the Protestants work as

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

one body? If they will, they can; and then they can do great things.

Why should our distinctive denominational designations be perpetuated in Porto Rico? The Island is a natural paradise; why not let it become an ecclesiastical paradise? Why cannot our benevolent societies be all satisfied to establish simple Churches of Christ, and call them by nothing else than the simple name of their Master? Such churches we do not doubt that the Porto Ricans would welcome.

Is this too much to ask? Is it anything more than was done by Peter and Paul, when they organized their first churches? Let the churches use a presbytery or not as they please; let them baptise by immersion or by sprinkling; let them have elders or bishops, as they please; let them follow their own freedom or strictures, as they please; but let them all be nothing other or more than a Church of Christ and let them all fellowship each other in the old Christian way of generous freedom guaranteed by the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

first Council of Jerusalem. In Japan six denominations united to form one; why cannot we all agree that in Porto Rico we will be one in the name of Jesus Christ?"

In fact, however, the "Name which is above every name" was slighted and God's decree for the "preeminence in all things" forgotten and the Churches started downward and not upward, astray and not in the path—the ecclesiastical path of which God has said, "This is the way, walk ye in it"—and so we read in the issue of April 6th the following:

"We had hoped that the scramble of the denominations in Porto Rico might be avoided, but this is impossible. We wished—but it was really beyond hope—that there might be one Church of Christ in Porto Rico, embracing all Christians who do not belong to the Roman Catholic Church, a Church not Presbyterian or Congregational or Baptist or Methodist, but simply Christian. But this may not be. General Henry, the Military Governor of Porto

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Rico, wanted it, and the Christian officers and civilians in San Juan wanted it, and they organized union services in the theater, but they did not organize a church and bid the sectarians keep off. Now the sectarians have come and nothing can now save the field from a sectarian Christianity.

‘Our churches demand to be represented,’ they all say. ‘We can make an appeal for our own sort,’ they would say, ‘not for any union work’; or ‘Our charter does not allow us to aid any but our own denominational churches’; ‘and, besides,’ they would say, ‘this denominational rivalry is not a bad thing; it assures more being done; and it looks worse at a distance than it really is. The missionaries will not quarrel, for they are Christians, and they will have their conferences together, and to the native Porto Ricans the difference will not be discernible.’ But the pity of it, the pity of it, that our missionary societies cannot for a while sink their denominational ambition!”



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Yes, the pity of it and the prospect of it, too! For never in the history of Church activity at home or abroad have sectarians proclaimed, "This denominational rivalry is not a bad thing," and proceeded accordingly, that Christianity and the Christ of it, have not been in fact subordinated to the notions and institutions of men, and the little things of sectarianism, urged triumphantly up among or over the mighty things of grace and truth and God, with the assured anticipation of "spiritual decline and death"!

The melancholy story is told in the experiences of another field, reported a year after in the same journal: "About forty years ago three societies—representing two nationalities—began work in a large Oriental city. For over half this period the converts knew no denominational name, and were known as 'believers'; 'ism' they never heard of. Union meetings were frequently held, *always* once a month in addition to the week of prayer. Thus

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

it was for over twenty years. Then a fourth society entered the field. It had a name—a name of little or no significance, as it appeared transposed by sound into the native tongue. It had little effect in the way of differentiation, for the missionaries were good men and forgot their ism. A number of years later, following a series of union evangelistic meetings, a union C. E. society was formed. Its meetings were a blessing to all, and doubtless they would have continued to the present time, with increasing benefit, but for an incident. A dignitary of the society last in the field made a visit of inspection. His dictum divided the C. E. society and compelled his branch to assume a new name. Such dictum was not in accord with the views of his brethren then in charge of the work. The result was *spiritual decline and death.*”

But will now this uncertain, this anomalous situation continue? Not long. Some one has truly said, “Tenacity of denominationalism is

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

generally in proportion as the distinctive feature is not found in the Bible." Yes, and is not tributary to Christ and is significant of dissolution withal.

Striking the keynote of denominationalism, and tolling its death knell at the same moment, one of our denominational editors, referring to the Scotch Highlanders, in their madness of secession, remarks: "It is pleasing to see any manifestation of strong adherence to conscientious convictions; steadfast adherence to what one believes is the most respectable trait in human nature." This sounds harmless—musical indeed in its familiar plausibility, but in fact it entirely forbids applied Christianity and is in effect fatal to Church life and at the same time defiant of God. "Strong adherence to conscientious conviction; steadfast adherence to what one believes" will embitter any family, terminate any friendship, dissolve any business partnership, break up any secular organization in the land. It will moreover dis-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

rupt any single church, endlessly divide any denomination and hopelessly estrange any actual or possible association of believers. It does, however, represent denominationalism, indicate its madness, and forecast its overthrow. It has within itself the germs of dissolution, but moreover it is proscribed, as well as moribund.

When at any time, in anything in which He is divinely interested, God gets all things ready in the department of supply, and admits to close relations with it the eager applications of demand, results—and if need be, radical results—always follow. When in the feeding of the five thousand, it was evening, and the tide of Christ's divine "compassion on the multitude" had risen to its flood, and the faint and hungry throng, already reclining in ranks by hundreds and by fifties on the green grass, were eagerly awaiting him, even though the twelve each with his "variety" which belongs to "unity" had announced a dilatory and self-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

gratifying and obstructive program of administration, it would have made not the slightest difference, nor kept the hungry people waiting for one moment—much less all through the night.

It takes no specially endowed prophet to see that at this twentieth century juncture, the Master in His compassion is at hand and in authority too, that men, great multitudes of men “besides women and children”—are hungry, and desperately hungry, and pathetically appealing, that full supplies and perfected facilities are available—and to predict that this is the day of God’s redemption and not man’s self-indulgence. The demand for Christianity is measureless and supremely urgent, the sufficiency of Christianity is conceded, the organization of Christianity is indispensable, and the realities and laws of the Kingdom tell the story of a new era.

## CHAPTER VI

IN this closing chapter of Organized Christianity, in its unique specialties, we may ask: Is it feasible, desirable, demanded, and under what principles and particulars of administration is it to be prosecuted?

This writer lives in a rapidly growing town, with which he is thoroughly acquainted. It has five thousand inhabitants with six Churches. Imagine some mighty magic process by which all its public institutions are suddenly blotted out—with people and homes and business all untouched.

Very soon under national and state laws, with self-control of individuals, observing business principles and invoking the light of experience and common sense, the people meet, organize and reconstruct. With strictest

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

economy and up-to-date enterprise they study ends and means.

The result is one Post Office, one Police Court, one Railroad station, one Fire department, one Public School, established and in due time successfully run by men having radical and endless diversities of character and tastes—but actuated by one dominant purpose.

Now for the churches and the sixteen hundred Christians. They are about to reconstruct on the old denominational basis, when a supernatural magic arrests them; they suddenly remember that they are subject to the law of Christ, “the Head of all things to the Church,” and now they proceed obediently and not in personal self-gratification, mindful of business principles, and the facts and laws of human need and human nature; and with one accord, organize one Christian Church, holding themselves strictly to the four Means for the four Ends of New Testament Christianity. They have one thoroughly furnished church build-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ing, centrally located. In due time they have one well-supported pastor of the Moody-Storrs type, spiritual, scholarly, executive, right with God, sympathetic with men, mighty in the Scriptures, and apt for all the ends of social life and uplift in the community, and withal on Mondays wont to go down the bay, and to the ocean, with as much fun as he can well get out of it for himself and others.

The Christians themselves are, as Christians all ought to be, filled with passion for Christ and souls of men, and with the graces of the Spirit, intelligent and obedient students of the Bible. Of course they radically differ mentally and temperamentally, just as business men do, but, just as business men do, cordially unite and coöperate for common and transcendent interests. They have personality and self-assertion—but humility and brotherly love as well. They have one Sabbath School with various outreachings. They have one Christian Endeavor Society. They have ordinances



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

with the deepest spirituality, but in forms as people prefer them. They escape countless sources of division, distraction and controversy. Moreover, five ministers and at least five thousand dollars per annum are released for other fields where they are infinitely needed. Now all the sectarian apologetists upon earth can be confidently challenged to visit this scene and, taking knowledge most exhaustively of former conditions, to detect a single point at which denominationalism or Federation could have given the least advantage, or from the standpoint of New Testament Christianity, to point out a single valid objection to the new arrangement, or indeed any objection in any respect save only in the matter of biases rebuked or disappointment and chagrin in stepping down and out from offices.

Here from Home fields come varying testimonials of the undoubted feasibility of Organized Christianity. A most intelligent authority from Maine is here: "This new type is

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

seen by many men in all denominations. It is a broad and comprehensive type, which lays emphasis upon the essentials of faith and permits sectarian peculiarities to drop into the background. Doctrine is more and more giving place to life; dogma yields daily to Christ-like charity and love. About the Person of Christ the Protestant Evangelical Church is rallying and finding the basis of union there. Literature confesses this. But without resort to literature, he who can attend religious gatherings of denominations, and of Christian workers from many denominations, finds the emphasis on Christ, and the theological perspective becoming more and more truly Christo-centric, and the type of Christian endeavor becoming Christian. This tendency, however, the country church has not as yet extensively realized. The average country church, in theology and consequent practical Christian living, is where it was a half century ago. Denominational leaders are in good part respon-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sible for this. They have cultivated denominational *esprit de corps* by reverting to past glories, by calling up conditions no longer existing, by stimulating the historical imagination, so desirable in the student of history, but so pernicious in the Christian who must do his part to-day in making local Christian history. . . .

But these subjects, if treated in the old way, do not present Christ as He is. Doctrines are needed, but the doctrines of the broadest outlook, the truest insight, the richest experience, and the fullest conception of Christianity, that God in His providence has been teaching the world in the school of these centuries past. The Christo-centric, and the Christo-livable type of Christianity must be set up in the country town."

Another from Kansas: "I came here three years ago and found four churches practically inoperative, though their guns were still pointed at each other. They had services semi-occa-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sionally, but no resident minister. So I—though twenty-five years a Baptist minister—persuaded them to confederate without regard to creed or ritual, simply for the purpose of maintaining a Gospel service and to save the people from heathenism. So we formed a Christian association, called ‘The People’s Church.’ The article of membership was life and loyalty to Jesus Christ. . . . For three years I have ministered on this basis without a ripple of dissention, and the town, though a difficult and godless mining town, has liberally supported the move.”

Still another from the vicinity of New York: “Our membership represents a dozen different denominations. We receive members by letter from other churches, and have dismissed them by letter to other denominations. The validity of a letter from our church has never once been questioned. Most Christians who have come among us have gladly joined us. Unitarians will not join nor Roman Catholics, al-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

though they attend our services and gladly co-operate in all our benevolent work. Methodists and Presbyterians both believe in the divine election to serve, and want it preached. Baptists freely accord the privilege of infant baptism, when parents desire it; they admit that the rite is very impressive. Some Episcopalians like our service better than their own. . . . Into our pulpit, or social meetings, denominational shibboleths are never admitted. It might be thought that such absence of doctrinal teaching would produce a flabby sort of Christian character, but we have found that the life and the truth in Jesus Christ call us to the most exacting and strenuous spiritual discipline."

Years ago, a Methodist declared with enthusiasm: "If we had a hundred Moodys and Sankeys in this country, all the orthodox Protestant sects would unite within ten years. We would have an entirely new system of organization and work. Instead of our numerous little churches, half sustained and half-filled on

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Sundays, we should have vast buildings, rivaling the old cathedrals of Europe in size, and crowded with worshipers. Each of these great temples would be the center of the religious life of a large district, and for parish work we would have numerous mission chapels, containing a library, reading-room, prayer-meeting room, and the offices of the working charitable societies."

Manifestly feasible at home, Organized Christianity is still more evidently practicable abroad, where there is deeper hunger for it. To illustrate from the truly Christian operations of the Young Men's Christian Association, says Rev. F. W. Anderson: "During 1901 the International Committee had twenty-two representatives, with headquarters in fifteen different centers in India, Ceylon, China, Japan, Korea and South America. During 1902 some ten new men were added to the force of secretaries, and several new centers have been opened up. Special attention is given to de-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

veloping the work among the students and educated natives, and the influence of the work is great. Evangelistic meetings are held, and Bible classes for inquirers and also for Christians are conducted, while the secretaries have all the personal interviews they can attend to. All this work is carried on with the hearty support and coöperation of the missionary force. No new field has been opened up without the urgent request of the foreign missionaries and the influential natives interested, and the limit to which this work may be extended and developed is bounded, not by the need nor the opportunity, but by the number of properly trained leaders and the home coöperation necessary to support their effort."

With very slight superficial adjustments, and a new survey of the field, and new reading of the Great Commission and due emancipation from the sectarianism of the home "Boards," the "missionary force" could not only heartily support and coöperate in this work, but for-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

saking schism and divisions, in glorious unity embark anew under its cross-lit banners.

Nobody expects that Primitive Christianity can be restored, and Christ, not only in our hymns but our hearts and organizations "crowned Lord of all," in a day, or without a costly, though reasonable breaking up of the old order, but Organized Christianity is to-day undoubtedly feasible.

Ten years ago a Princeton Professor (with plentiful recent echoes from the same quarter) remarked: "We cannot expect Evangelical Christians to be willing to unite on the basis of the *minimum* of truth held by them in common." Why not? What they intelligently hold in common is a minimum that includes the maximum of aims and agencies of New Testament piety, and precludes only the self-indulgence in prepossessions, which learned but biased men insist upon enshrining at the centers, but which, although expressed in ambitious and academic terms, are in fact insignif-



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

icant in practical claims, and are to be relegated at once and forever to the domain of private opinion.

What a book reviewer says of Sabatier's doubtful half truths is undoubtedly true of Organized Christianity: "It furnishes the ground on which the unity of Christendom becomes possible, not by attenuating the differences which now divide the various branches of the Christian Church, but by raising the whole question to a plane, upon which these questions lose their significance."

Truly says the *Westminster*, of Philadelphia: "Not by modifications in ecclesiastical millinery, nor by anxious modifications of doctrine, nor by asking how much each may surrender, but by possession of the purpose of Christ shall the Church become one. Then in accordance with its deep unity of purpose, it shall clothe itself in ritual, creed and polity expressive of its faith."

"The only way in which American people

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

have not shown a genius for organization," says President Woodrow Wilson, "is that they have not shown a genius for simplification." This may be true in the realm of scholarship, but it can scarcely be said of the American in the activities of business life, and it need not be at all true in the activities of piety. In New Testament days differing Christians organized in and for the "simplicity that is in Christ" and the twentieth century is the time, and America the place for them to do it again—to give indeed Christianity at last a fair trial. "I don't know, sir, it has never been tried," replied Wendell Phillips, when asked, "Is Christianity a failure?"

New Testament Christianity is feasible—and "now is the accepted time" to try it.

Again, Organized Christianity is not only generally desirable but cogently demanded—alike by the imperativeness of God and the ever increasing exigencies of men. Dr. Josiah Strong, as long ago as 1893, warned us that

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

times and people were radically changing, and that we had got to change with them and for them. He says: "So general a tendency toward the centralization of population, of political power, of capital and of production, manifested in ways so various, can indicate nothing less than a great movement toward a closer organization of society, a new development of civilization"; and quotes as follows: "If anything has been made certain by the economic revolution of the last twenty-five years, it is that society cannot much longer get on upon the old libertarian, competitive, go-as-you-please system, to which so many sensible persons seem addicted. The population of the great nations is becoming too condensed for that." Again: "It is felt by every student and every statesman, that some movement, vast and momentous, though indefinite, is passing like a great wave over the civilized world. It is idle to refuse to admit the fact that modern civilization is in a transition state. . . . There

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

are a thousand evidences that the present state of things is drawing to a close, and that some new development of social organization is at hand." Once more: "Everywhere, the old order is changing and giving place unto the new. The human race is now at one of the crucial periods in its history, when the fountains of the great deep are broken up, and the flood of change submerges all the old-established institutions and conventions, in the midst of which preceding generations have lived and died."

Constitutional indolence, conservatism and self-complacency of rulers in nations and churches, are such, that revolutionary tendencies without, have usually appealed in vain for new and appropriate measures of and for reform, at headquarters, until appalling disasters and losses have been precipitated upon all parties—disasters and losses which a wise fidelity to facts and principles would surely have prevented. The Church at home and abroad is

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

confronted by universal, deep-seated and portentous revolution in the thought, sentiments, purposes and organizations of men, and the one demand of all the world, is for the Christianity of the Redeeming Christ, and this, according to the love and law of the Redeeming Christ!

And is the Church ready, equipped, watching? Hear Archdeacon Farrar: "Our present methods will not reach them; to our elaborate theologies, and our routine ceremonies, our professional fineries, they have nothing to say; for rubrics and millinery and stereotyped services, they care no more than they do for the idle wind; they want a broader, simpler, larger, truer, manlier, less conventional, less corrupt, less fourth-century gospel; they want the essential gospel; they want Christ.

New times want new methods and new men; and if we do not adopt new methods, and find new men who really are men, we shall die of our impotent respectability.

Churches need many resurrections, many

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Pentecosts. An unprogressive is a dying church; a retrogressive church is a dead church. The efforts of such churches are but the spasmodic semblance of activity; the ceremonies of such churches are but as spangles on their funeral pall. . . . The deliverance will come in God's good time; but it will not come from the popular phrases or the dominant machinery. It will only come when among all the soft, bland tones which fill our ears, God gives us once more some prophet's mighty voice."

Here is an editorial comment which is just as cogently applicable to the United States as it is to Great Britain: "Rev. Dr. Alex. Mac-laren, of Manchester, England, greatest of living preachers, is reported as saying that he confesses that his heart sometimes fails him when he thinks of the present aspects and prospects of Christianity in Great Britain. The great wealth, the loosened bonds of Christian faith, the neglect of the Sabbath, the growing senseless luxury, the godlessness of all classes

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

of society in this day, from the highest to the lowest, are enough to break the heart of workers. He could not but read in the social life of England, in the public action of the country, in the corruption of the municipalities, in the growing intemperance of the people, in the manifestly increasing impatience of the press, in the leaders of opinion, who were ready to shake off the last fragments of Christianity, and who in many cases were talking rubbish and nonsense about the superior claims of Buddhism, Hinduism, and he knew not what 'ism'—he could not but see in all these things, a call to Christian people to be ashamed of their quarrelings and envyings, and to go forward shoulder to shoulder, and to close their ranks against the foe.

Everything that Dr. Maclaren says is entitled to a hearing. How solemn the testimony of this man of such advanced years, who, in his fifty years' ministry has never said or written anything that needs to be recalled! And

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

what a trumpet peal to the Church, calling on all disciples to forget insignificant differences, in view of their magnificent basis of agreement on vital truths, and the singular unity and solidarity of a malignant foe!"

And is the Church exhibiting becoming vigilance and fidelity at the foreign outposts? Look at this single picture of one of multitudes—drawn by Robert E. Lewis, of the Young Men's Christian Association: "Close observation of the work of the American Board in China convinces me that somebody has acted with no less than awful neglect of the Lord's work. The support of the work has fallen off, the number of workers at great centers has decreased, the largeness of the ripe harvest has overwhelmed the small band of workers. At Foochow, the force has been so small and the work so great that in the midst of taxing language-study one missionary is forced to take charge of and superintend the following work: (1) He is president of a theological seminary, with



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

twenty-four students, and must direct the teaching as well as do much of it—all in Chinese—for the most pressing need of the mission is for trained Chinese workers. (2) There are nine native churches in the city which he alone must supervise, and whose difficulties and problems he must help the native pastors to solve. (3) There are four chapels, not yet organized as churches, which he must provide for. There is no one else to do it. (4) There are twelve day schools in the city under his care. There is a Chinese teacher for each, but can the schools be left without supervision? Not unless they are abandoned.

Nor is this all. In the neighboring country there are some thirty villages, in each of which from three hundred to five hundred persons have given up their idols, and have asked the mission to send to each a native pastor. But there is no money to send a single man. Within nine miles of this theological seminary, there are twenty points where the people have

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

already built chapels, and are waiting for pastors, but not a single man can be sent. God only knows what will become of these villages, but it is clear that the last state of them may be worse than the first.

When one faces such overwhelming opportunities, such pressure of work, and such an indifference on the part of American Christians, that the work is brought to this pass, he is led to wonder what the end will be. Three persons will be sent into that mission this year, but where twenty are actually needed, the pressure will not be relieved. Whose is this criminal neglect?"

The present demand is supremely urgent because with the ever-rising tide of intellectual, social, political, moral agitation, the former demands have not been met, and the present cumulative twentieth century application, we may be sure, is for an unincumbered Christianity. Denominationalism has failed and will fail, and from its relation to laws and facts

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

alike, must fail. Federation, too, in the momentous crisis of sin and redemption, must and will fail. Its confession of faith is: "Lord, I will follow Thee, but suffer me first——" Its profession of consecration is: "I ought to surrender all, but I will keep back part of the price."

Rev. H. A. Bridgeman describes it, and united Churches of New Zealand repudiate it. Says Mr. Bridgeman: "Above all, Porto Rico should furnish a shining illustration of harmony and coöperation between different Christian bodies. Three years ago, when work was beginning there, we heard a good deal about conferences between the different Boards in New York, and of an allotment of different sections of the island to different denominations. How are the compacts then made being fulfilled? What degree of fellowship and co-operation is there to-day between the thirteen members of our American Missionary Association mission, the twenty-one Presbyterian, the

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ten Baptists, the five Episcopalians, and between all of these Christian workers and the United States Commissioner of Education, and his one hundred and twenty-five teachers?"

An *Independent* editorial remarks significantly: "The biologists suggest to us that sudden changes in environment are likely to originate new species. It was some great convulsion that separated the geological periods, with their diverse fauna and flora. When one great cycle of animals and plants was destroyed by the upheaval of some mountain chain, the few survivors produced a different progeny fitted for the new conditions." It then adds of the New Zealanders: "Can we imagine the Presbyterian General Assembly and the Methodist General Conference and the Congregational National Council here agreeing to unite into a single body? Yet that is what these denominations, and others, expect to do in New Zealand. A deputation from the Presbyterian General Assembly visited the Methodist General

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Conference, and proposed union. To be sure, said their speaker, we have different creeds, one Calvinistic, the other Arminian, but both are true and we will make a new creed. This proposition was received enthusiastically, and when a resolution was introduced recognizing the fading of sectarian differences, and appointing committees to confer on a plan of *federation*, the word was changed to *union*, and the resolution unanimously adopted."

Anywhere Christian union is feasible if it be *Christian*, and everywhere the voices of Heaven and earth are heard, calling for Christianity that is unqualified and unencumbered—the New Testament Christianity of Christ and the apostles and the early Church!

Christianity is to-day feasible, demanded, sufficient and alone sufficient!

But according to what established principles and with what practical prescriptions are we to proceed? It has been suggestively said that "The mountains will show you the valleys,

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

but the valleys will not show you the mountains." And it is doubtless true that the valleys of denominationalism will not interpret the mountains of Christianity, while on the other hand it is certain that the mountains of Christianity will most illuminatingly interpret the denominations. And in these days of more or less blind bondage to denominationalism, the hope of the Church lies in rising in due emancipation as speedily as possible, to the heights of Christ and the apostles, and so formulating creeds and plans for appropriate enterprise. Being of "one accord" in this exalted situation, Pentecostal inspirations will make "all things" ours, whether of ends or means.

Organizing Christianity, shall we be like the Italian Christians, embarrassed for a name? In fact almost any name will answer so long as it surely honors the Transcendent Name—*The Church of God, The Church of the New Testament, The New Testament Christian As-*

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

sociation, *The Christian Association*, might answer.

Then for Creed. Creed making, the old "*hic labor, hoc opus est*," of our sectarian forefathers, is quite an easy matter in these days. The last Congregational creed is a good one, Scriptural and Evangelical. Such is also the admirable catechism of 1898, unanimously adopted by representatives of Wesleyan Methodists, Baptists, Primitive Methodists, Presbyterians, Methodist New Connection, Bible Christians, and United Methodist Free Church, in England and reported in full in the *Independent* of February 9, 1899. Then the Young Men's Christian Association and Union Churches furnish ready to our hands Christocentric creeds.

Here is the *Westminster's* contribution:

First: That Jesus is the divine and living Lord.

Second: That He came down from Heaven and died in atonement for our sins.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Third: That the Bible is the inspired Word of God, "the only infallible rule of faith and practice."

Fourth: That every Christian is saved to serve, and is responsible for his opportunities to influence others.

Fifth: That there is no might nor power but by the Spirit of the living God.

Polity, too, which so worried and divided our controversial ancestors, is for us quite a simple matter. As Sohm has clearly shown, in this respect, the New Testament leaves us—under the superintendence of the Holy Spirit—quite at liberty for the pursuit of spiritual ends by business methods. In this the history and experience of the Young Men's Christian Association instruct us—as do also the "Children of this world," "in their generation wiser than the children of light." Our ecclesiastical forefathers could have saved themselves a world of vexatious debates if in a teachable spirit they had watched a thousand stockholders elect



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

a president and six directors, and then leave to them the details of practical control.

One special item of regulation will speedily crowd itself in for adoption: "No minister dependent upon his salary shall ever be engaged for less than a thousand dollars a year." This, to be sure, ought to be quite comfortably adopted when it is recalled that Dr. Josiah Strong says that "the hundred richest men in the United States, who have the greatest influence in the financial world, are almost without exception, orthodox church members."

Then Organized Christianity must be duly protected from ignorance. Its motto should be: "Anything but callowness of mind and crudeness of intellectuality—except leanness of soul." Dr. Schauffler once remarked of the Sunday School: "It is strong in the heart and weak in the head." If it were so it were a grievous fault, and a fault still more grievous, if detected in the pulpit, especially since if there one be

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

“weak in the head” he is apt to be soft “in the heart.”

The demand of an enlightened and critical age is for a correspondingly enlightened and intellectually powerful ministry. Sometimes under exceptional conditions, God graciously employs for evidently special reasons, an uneducated man for glorious work, but that is no more proof that as a rule, the ministers are not to be intellectually furnished and masterful, than his occasional employment of a bed-ridden invalid, more than others, to edify and uplift a neighborhood, proves that religious workers are not to walk about in health.

The law of God, and the ever-growing intelligence of this generation, alike call for thinkers in the pulpit and the parsonage, and while God can work by an unfortunately weak man, He will not work by a presumptuous and unnecessarily weak man. Dr. Norman Macleod said that no doubt a sharp questioner could corner him on the habit, but none the less he studied

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and thought as if everything depended on him, while he prayed and trusted as if everything depended on God. And this is the rule for every minister; to call on God as importunately as possible, and to call on himself as imperatively as possible, with abundant mental supplies within to call upon. It is as if the head druggist kept strictly in his own hands the secret elixir, which at last gave vital efficacy to the mixture, and yet required his subordinate clerks to prepare the mixture with the greatest pains and the most scientific correctness. God sometimes accepts the things that are "small." He always refuses the things that are cheap.

President Woodrow Wilson says truly: "Pedagogically you cannot impart appreciation for the song of a bird, the glory of a landscape or the subtle shade of an idiom.

If ever an age stood in sore need of those who see the invisible, this does; if ever an age needed statesmanship of the mind, this age

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

needs it. Let there be an army of workers, with their gaze concentrated on their own little tasks, with no one to dream dreams for them, none to see visions, no generals of the mind to organize our great combinations of effort, and it will not be long before we stumble upon disaster. I don't mean to tell you that information is not a part of education, but I do say that brute information—mere gross bodies of fact—does not educate. Information, so far from accelerating the powers of the mind, may even clog them; unless it disciplines it impedes."

The principle here indicated has a special application to theological students and ministers. They must needs have knowledge and a plenty of it; but that is not all. They must be educated to intuitions of moral and spiritual realities. It is not enough that they know the technical answers to theological questions, and have library-minds with an orderly arrangement of orthodox truths, all correctly labelled, and each duly numbered on its own shelf or in its own

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

row, but with personal penetration and grasp and appropriation and subjective thrill, they must "see the invisible"—the invisible beings and realities of earth, as well as by spiritual perceptions, the invisible beings and realities of heaven. They want information much, but education more, and correspondingly not only capacity to report, but conceptions to express and more, a cultivated ripened intellectuality which is uniquely fruitful—an intellectuality of facts, still more of visions, and above all, of inventions. This leads us higher up—not only to the realm of truth but of grace.

"Pedagogically you cannot impart appreciation for the song of a bird, the glory of a landscape or the subtle shade of an idiom"—you can, however, do these things by educational inspiration. But the visions, the insight and the corresponding inventions, which belong to the Bible student, cannot be imparted either pedagogically or by educational inspiration by any man. The beauty of holiness, the senti-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

ments and activities of heaven, the love, the voice of God, the heavenly intercessions, the earthward manifestations of Christ, the uprising and reception of prayer or praise, the downward movements of parental and redemption love, can be made constrainingly real to us, only by the Spirit of Holiness, who, it is most important to remember and emphasize, will not duly visit us on any careless or postponed invitations.

The Churches and the young Christian thinkers of this day, need beyond all calculation, a Theological Seminary of the deepest, broadest, brightest, most abounding, up-to-date scholarship, yet with large spaces and choice hours preempted for God; on the premises large room set apart as "the secret place of the Most High"—and sacredly reserved time and assured tranquillity for the messages and inspirations that come straight down. The *Chaplain* in fact much in evidence.

There is no call for Christian students, in

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

the Seminary or out of it, to be fussily and obtrusively "pious" or to indulge fanaticism or parade solemnity, but the department of spiritual development is of supreme importance and, strange as it may seem, in a Theological Seminary, specially liable to neglect. In addition to the odd fact of Christian experience, that it is far easier to think closely or do vigorously than to pray devoutly, and our natural pride of intellect, there is an added local pride—a complacent self-righteousness of theological orthodoxy to be vigilantly and resolutely guarded against. Various expressed, the delusive thought is, "The truth, *our* truth, covers the field of experience, affords light, insures power," while all the time, all parties are liable to the melancholy combination which Macauley deprecated as so disastrous: "A union of high intelligence with low desires."

Not many months since, this writer heard the President of a well-known Theological Seminary deliver the closing address to a large

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

graduating class, with abounding wit and classical propriety, but with no more recognition of, or allusion to, spiritual realities, than if they had been graduating physicians, lawyers or lecturers.

Organized Christianity needs a Theological Seminary of its own even if there is a superfluity of sectarian ones already, and the reasons are patent. As already mentioned in these pages, Christian young men in schools and colleges have tasted New Testament Christianity and its happy unities. At least twenty-five hundred of them are virtually committed to the declarations of "The Student Recruits for the Christian Ministry" of California. These say: "We stand for: (1) A united Church. We believe that churches divided against each other cannot stand. We declare ourselves against the competitive missionary work anywhere. We agree to work for church harmony and unity of spirit. (2) Missionary aggressiveness. Believing in the last command



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

of Jesus Christ in the broadest world-wide sense, it is the purpose of this organization to stand for and promote an intelligent study and a wide-awake, active interest in missions. (3) An up-to-date ministry. We seek preparation to meet and satisfy both the fundamental, and the new and special needs of the church in our own generation."

The movement is described as follows: "At the recent College Y. M. C. A. Conference, held at Pacific Grove, California, over one-fourth of the men present, representing every college in the State, bound themselves together in a union, declared their 'purpose to become ministers of Jesus Christ,' and to 'aggressively promote the consideration of the ministry as a vocation for Christian young men.' This movement has taken the name of 'The Student Recruits for the Christian Ministry,' and those who formed the union, have returned to their sixteen different institutions to further its purposes and gain recruits."

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

The fact is the Christian young men of the nation know from experience the happy feasibility of Organized Christianity and when denominational leaders from thirty (perhaps forty or fifty) denominations say to them: "You must go separately into our thirty denominational Seminaries, and go forth in thirty divisions, to set up thirty rival missions abroad or, on an average salary of seven hundred dollars, struggle along in rivalries at home—in competition with thirty of your brethren," the young men decline, and will more and more decline and turning aside from the regular ministry altogether, go out for Christ and the missions of Christ, if they go at all, as Association men rather than ministers. The candidates for our denominational Seminaries are "alarmingly decreasing" they tell us, and until Seminary instruction on a New Testament and not sectarian basis, can be offered them, they are likely to decline, and likely, moreover, to be endorsed of God and heaven in doing it.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

The Christianity of the twentieth century needs a Seminary, thoroughly endowed with twentieth century liberality, for students admitted only after most intelligent acquaintance with them, a Seminary, with a four years' course, which shall be consecrated to the business of preparing men physically, mentally, spiritually, to be *preachers* and *leaders*!—a four years' rugged, exhilarating, triumphant climb up to the enchanted region of exact alignment between the Pastoral and Redeeming Christ and His lost ones found, and His lost ones to be found—in ignorance, perplexity, suffering, sin, living and dying—to be found!—a Seminary with a distinctive aim to constrain young men ever more and more, for four years to a vital, filial intimacy with God, and a cordial understanding—a working understanding with God, and at the same time, to a Christ-like sympathy and an apostolic aptitude for men, a Seminary whose thinking shall be Scriptural, rational, profound and Christo-centric.

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

And now to be practical (or is it visionary?), why not forthwith acquire and rehabilitate dear old moribund Andover, annex it to Northfield, and rededicate it to New Testament Christianity?

Educated Christian young men, suffer a word of exhortation: Study for the ministry! On your part mind not meagerness or meanness of salary. When they were devoted to His and their Christ, in all their varied tribulations—their wrongs and sufferings at the hands of world, flesh and devil—or the Church, God has always taken thorough-going care of His servants, and He will care for you! Take not counsel of visible and superficial, temporary, earth-born objections!

Dr. Arthur J. Brown said of Rev. Boon-Itt, of Siam: "He is one of the most remarkable men I have met in Asia. At the head of his 'clan,' whose family home is in Bangkok, he is widely and favorably known in the capital. Young men like him and resort to him for ad-

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

vice, whenever he visits the city. The government has repeatedly offered him lucrative posts, and I was told by United States Minister King, that a trading corporation in Laos is eager to employ him at a salary of \$4,000, gold. As a minister of Christ he receives \$650 and a tumble-down native house, and he would rather be a missionary on those terms than an official or a trader on a higher salary."

Of course he would, and this is simply an echo of universal testimony. In all the ages, whenever a man in the fear of God, and filled with intelligent passion for the Christ whom, in the intimacies of discipleship he has seen face to face, and actuated by a heaven-born redemption zeal for lost men, has chosen to be a minister of the gospel, he has been exultingly glad of it first and last, even if he did sacrifice and suffer! Young men, every great, every greatest thing, every primary, overtowering fact or factor in heaven or on earth calls you—if God will let you—calls you to be a minister of

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Christ! The *Immanuel* of all earthly life in all things is preeminently, assuredly here. Thirty years ago, a dying missionary, with seventeen years of glad fidelity behind him, suddenly aroused and to an unseen but real audience cried:

“Christian young men! The responsibility of saving the world rests on you; not on the old men, but on the young men. It is past the time for holding back and waiting for ‘Providence.’ I used to think a missionary ought to husband his strength; but this is a crisis in the world’s history, and by keeping back, one may keep others back. Wisdom is profitable to direct, but the man that rushes to duty is faithful. At times, promptness becomes the rule and caution the exception. The Church is a military company; an army of conquest, not of occupation.”  
Young Men, Forward!

Listen to Henry Ward Beecher who in his early home, and early ministry knew every form of poverty and strait, that could deter a

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Christian student, standing on the threshold of the ministry. "Men say that the pulpit has run its career and that there is but little time before it will come to an end. Not so long as men continue to be weak and sinful and tearful and expectant, without any help near; not so long as the world lieth in wickedness; not so long as there is an asylum over and above that one which we see with our physical senses; not until men are transformed and the earth empty—not until then, will the work of the Christian ministry cease. . . . It is the sweetest in substance, the most enduring in its joys, the most content in its poverty and limits if your lot is cast in places of scarcity, more full of crowned hopes, more full of whispering messages from those gone before, nearer to the threshold, nearer to the throne, nearer to the heart of Him who was pierced, but who lives forever, and says, 'Because I live, ye shall live also.' "

But first of all the call is to begin. As Horace Greeley said: "The way to resume is

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

to resume." And the way to have New Testament Christianity on the earth, in full New Testament measure and according to the conceptions of God, is to begin it—and begin it at once and at the point of most urgent and inviting availability.

Mrs. Sage, Miss Gould, John Wanamaker (pardon the personality!), and the "one hundred richest men"—"orthodox church members" discovered by Dr. Strong, would it not be in the line of a truly magnificent opportunity to provide at once for say, seven New Testament missionaries—to go out under a ten years' contract? Let them be thoughtfully selected by men like John R. Mott, Robert E. Speer and W. R. Moody. Let there be perhaps of the mission force, four married, two single, and one medical—with one in some sense a superintendent. Let them go out not only permitted but obliged to take care of themselves, select their own field and be their own "Secretaries." Paul and his fellow missionaries were sent out



## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and prayed for, by home Churches, but for mission administration on the field, the Holy Spirit visited them directly. Above all let the seven be thoroughly Christian, and not much else—satisfied with and actuated by the most intense passion for the four Ends and the four Means of primitive, apostolic piety, and to whom in thought and heart and life, Christ is “All and in all”! Then let some \$87,500 be securely invested, subject to their order, for salary and travel expense. This means indeed a slight advance over current missionary salaries. Does either heavenly bounty or earthly economy discountenance this? From any point of view can the Church afford to give less?

Wise Andrew Carnegie, in your just but altogether novel apprehension of dying a rich man, is there not here a rare—a most inviting avenue of relief? Why not finance Organized Christianity? Why not endow a re-baptised Andover? As a business man, like John Hay and a thousand others like-minded, who have

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

believed in Christianity but repudiated its all overloading accessories, you can appreciate ends and means, economies and efficiencies, facts and principles. Is there any other cause which invites your "means" for such transcendent ends? You can appreciate too the melancholy plight of the young men, who for education, affiliation, and a field, want Christianity and have sectarianism. You can appreciate the following from the Presbyterian *Westminster*, of Philadelphia: "The Y. M. C. A. is, we believe, the institution which exhibits the most aggressive and wholesome phase of Christianity to be found on the globe. It sounds no trumpet before it, but acts and then announces. Where young men go, it goes. There is no hesitancy or indecision. It looks, sees, thinks, resolves, does. It must be dear to God. The story of its accomplishments is wonderful. Here is the latest exhibition of its vigilant energy. It required two years for the Association to convince the authorities there could not be too much

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

religion in Canal construction. But now the organization has a free hand. Within three months the Y. M. C. A. has contracted with the Canal Commission for the erection in the zone by the government of seven buildings in which, when completed, the five thousand or more young Americans in Panama may receive instruction, entertainment, and helpful fellowship."

It is well to build a Peace Palace, and libraries, and schools and colleges. If now, you build up for peace and truth, apostolic Christianity, with all heaven co-laboring, is it not certain that in due time and quite rewardingly you will hear from earth and heaven alike "Well done"? Andrew Carnegie, "Think on these things"!

President Theodore Roosevelt (excuse the impertinence of your Long Island neighbor), the editors and politicians are much concerned about what you shall do at the close of your Presidential career. This do, Mr. President:

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

Take up and put through Organized Christianity! It will indeed not be as though "some strange thing had happened unto you."

Henry Ward Beecher said of his noble father, that to the end of his days he retained the Nimrod instinct and to the last felt called and moved to go gunning for the devil. Could there be a nobler "sport"? And could there be a nobler plan of prosecuting it, than that of indirect strategy in campaigning Organized Christianity? Will this not be surely congenial to you? Does it not promise unfailing and most gratifying success?

You were favored of Heaven in negotiating peace between two contending nations of the East, and arresting war and the death and desolations of it. Will it not be congenial to you, by pure and simple, God-ordered Christianity, to arrest the warring animosities, the spiritual conflicts of the sons of men, and leading them to the "peace which passeth all understanding."

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

bring the tranquillity and life and love of heaven down to earth?

Will it not be congenial to you to look into the methods and transactions of that great corporation—the American Church? Does not this penurious and niggardly policy as to the ministers and their families deeply excite you? Are not alike your sense of justice, and kindness of heart awakened by the spectacle of the struggling miseries of noble men and gentle women and children, which are laid bare in the story that the average salary of the one hundred and fifty thousand ministers is but seven hundred dollars a year? And then for you too, the young men in what they ought to be and want to be as united Christians and what they must be as separated denominationalists!

Mr. President, you are alive to national appeals. The nations want Christianity and ask for it. They neither need nor want sectarianism.

Paul was very intelligent. He would rather

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

have been Apostle than President. Mr. President, will it not be supremely gratifying to you, first and last, to have been both?

A. F. Schauffler, John R. Mott, Charles M. Alexander, Howard Agnew Johnston, John B. Devins (and by the way, Dr. Devins, why not at once re-launch the *Observer* as the organ of Organized Christianity?), Robert E. Speer, W. R. Moody, A. G. Moody, W. W. White, John Wanamaker, William Phillips Hall, Richard S. Holmes, J. Ross Stevenson, Albert E. Keigwin, C. E. Jefferson, A. C. Dixon, Wilton Merle Smith, and a great multitude which no man ought to be able to number: Is this not the time for new thought and radically new enterprise for the restoration of Primitive Christianity? Are not God in heaven and all the inhabitants of earth crowding upon you the ideals, the first things, the supreme claims, the imperative commission of Primitive Christianity? And are they not calling for organization

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and intelligent and scientific enterprise accordingly?

Listen to the denominational pronouncement and ultimatum: "What we are used to, we are attached to and want, and so it is necessarily normal and essential, and we shall prosecute it to the utmost, at all times, anywhere, anyhow!"

Listen to God's twentieth century proclamation: "Them that honor Me, I will honor"—and "You have got to confess Christ before men!"

Listen to the maxim of solution: "Bible principles to please God, and business principles to win men!"

To quote from Mark Guy Pearse: "The little lad reading some story becomes enwrapped in the fortunes of his hero—difficulties and dangers thicken about him; his safety is threatened on all sides; how shall it end? Excited and eager, he turns over the pages and looks further on. It is all right; the hero lives

## ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY

and triumphs. Now the lad breathes again, and with a brave heart faces the course of the fight once more. We, like the little lad, have sometimes trembled for the fortunes of our King. Then it is good to skip the pages of time, and look at the end. It is all right. 'Alleluia, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. And He shall reign forever and ever.' "

Even so: in the meantime, What? Who?

THE END





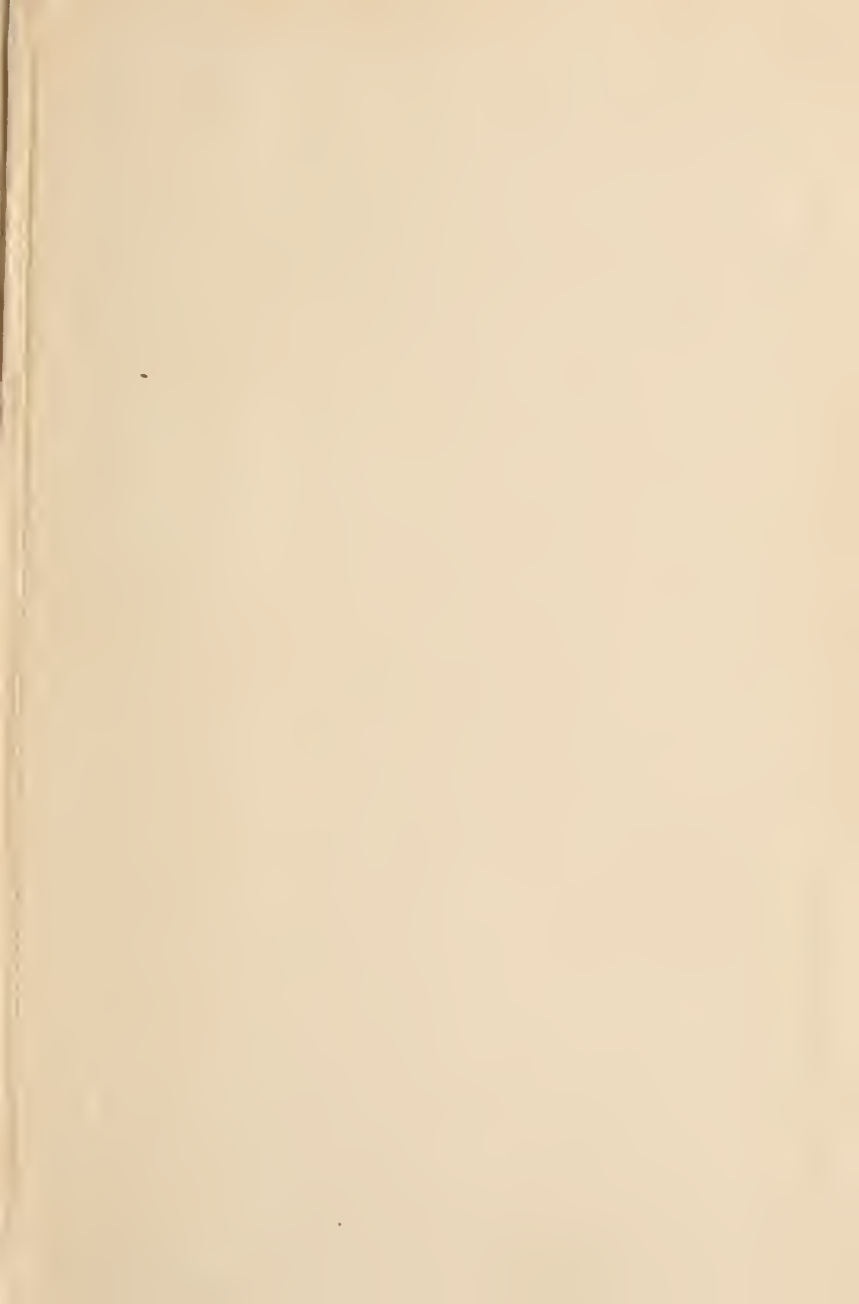












Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01032 5886